

Rear Admiral Michael J. Johnston

Ninth Coast Guard District Commander



Rear Admiral Johnston assumed duty as the Ninth District Commander in May 2021. He is the senior Coast Guard Commander for the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Seaway, an area that encompasses eight states, a 1,500 mile international border, and a workforce of over 6,000 Coast Guard active duty, reserve, civilian and auxiliary men and women.

Rear Admiral Johnston previously served as the Coast Guard's Assistant Commandant for Acquisition and Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO). As CAO he directed efforts across all Coast Guard acquisition programs, acquisition support, personnel, finance, contracting, and research and development activities to execute the service's acquisition portfolio.

Prior to reporting as CAO, he served as Program Executive Officer and Director of Acquisition Programs, where his duties included management oversight of all Coast Guard acquisition programs and projects for modernization and recapitalization of surface, air, command and control, and logistics assets in support of the Coast Guard's multiple maritime missions.

Rear Admiral Johnston graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1990 with a Bachelor's of Science in Electrical Engineering. After serving two consecutive tours afloat, he attended the Georgia Institute of Technology to complete a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering. He then served as a project manager and senior communications network engineer for the Vessel Traffic Systems and the Differential Global Positioning System.

He was selected to serve as Aide to the Commandant of the Coast Guard from 2000-2002. During this tumultuous timeframe, his work helped restore the Nation to normalcy following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He also helped to transition the Coast Guard into the newly formed Department of Homeland Security.

Rear Admiral Johnston went back to operations as the Deputy Commander for Group St. Petersburg, Florida, coordinating operations with partner agencies and restructuring the unit into a Sector Command. Following this assignment, he reported as Commanding Officer of the Electronics Systems Support Unit in New Orleans, Louisiana; just two months before Hurricane Katrina. He coordinated response, recovery, and repair efforts for all command and control systems across the Gulf Coast from Mexico to Florida.

In 2008, Rear Admiral Johnston graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a Master of Science in Management and Systems Engineering. A DHS Level III Acquisitions Program Manager, he went on to serve as the Deputy Project Manager of the C4ISR acquisition program, delivering significant capabilities to the newest cutters and aircraft for the Service.

From 2011 to 2014, Rear Admiral Johnston served as the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard's Command, Control, and Communications Engineering Center. He was responsible for the development, deployment, sustainment, logistics support, training, and configuration management for all C3 systems in the Coast Guard.

His other senior-level assignments include serving as deputy chief of the Officer Personnel Management Division where he was responsible for all officer accessions, assignments and qualifications. In June 2015, he was selected to be the Executive Director for the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS) with responsibilities for coordinating mission support functions across the Coast Guard.