

# MARINE AIR CONTROL GROUP 18

## CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY



27 June 2025  
MCAS Futenma,  
Okinawa, Japan



The Commanding Officer  
Marine Air Control Group 18  
1st Marine Aircraft Wing

**Colonel Michael D. Hicks**

takes great pleasure in welcoming you to  
Marine Air Control Group 18's  
45th Change of Command  
aboard  
Marine Corps Air Station Futenma,  
Okinawa, Japan  
on this 27th day of June 2025  
where

**Colonel Justin M. Sanders**

will become the  
46th Commanding Officer  
of Marine Air Control Group 18  
since it's activation on  
1 September 1967



# SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

INVOCATION

ATTENTION/ADJUTANT'S CALL

SOUND OFF

PUBLISH THE ORDERS

OFFICERS' CENTER

CHANGE OF COMMAND

NATIONAL ANTHEM

COMMANDING GENERAL'S REMARKS

COLONEL HICKS' REMARKS

COLONEL SANDERS' REMARKS

ANCHORS AWEIGH

MARINES' HYMN

# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



## *LINEAGE OF MARINE AIR CONTROL GROUP 18*

1967 – 1991

REACTIVATED 1 SEPTEMBER 1967 AT DA NANG, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM,  
AS MARINE AIR CONTROL GROUP 18 AND ASSIGNED TO 1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING

PARTICIPATED IN THE WAR IN VIETNAM, SEPTEMBER 1967 – APRIL 1971

RELOCATED DURING APRIL 1971 TO IWAKUNI, JAPAN

RELOCATED DURING SEPTEMBER 1975 TO FUTENMA, OKINAWA, JAPAN

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT, IRAQ MAY 1991

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION SEA ANGEL, BANGLADESH, MAY 1991

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION FIERY VIGIL, PHILIPPINES, JUNE 1991

1992 – 2025

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, AFGHANISTAN AND UZBEKISTAN,  
OCTOBER 2001 – FEBRUARY 2004 AND 2009 – 2010

PARTICIPATED IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS,  
PHILIPPINES, IN RESPONSE TO FLOODING, DECEMBER 2004

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION UNIFIED ASSISTANCE,  
THAILAND AND INDONESIA, JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2005

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, IRAQ,  
MARCH – SEPTEMBER 2007

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION SEA ANGEL II, BANGLADESH,  
NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2007

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN SUPPORT OF CARING RESPONSE, MYANMAR,  
MAY – JUNE 2008

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION TOMODACHI, JAPAN, MARCH – APRIL 2011

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION DAMAYAN, PHILIPPINES, NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2013

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION SAHAYOGI HAAT, NEPAL, APRIL – MAY 2015

# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



*HONORS AWARDED*  
*MARINE AIR CONTROL GROUP 18*

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION STREAMER

VIETNAM  
1967

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION STREAMER

VIETNAM  
1967-1968

MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION STREAMER WITH FOUR BRONZE  
STARS

1982-1984  
1985-1987  
1997-1999  
2000-2002  
2004-2005

AMERICAN CAMPAIGN STREAMER

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

VIETNAM SERVICE STREAMER WITH TWO SILVER STARS

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM SERVICE STREAMER

VIETNAM CROSS OF GALLANTRY WITH PALM STREAMER

VIETNAM MERITORIOUS UNIT CIVIL ACTIONS STREAMER

## MACG-18 COMMANDER HISTORY

Col Lyle V. Tope	01 Sept 1967
LtCol James W. Dillon	22 May 1968
Col Edward S. Fris	03 Aug 1968
Col Stanley G. Dunwiddle Jr.	16 Jul 1969
Col Charles T. Westcott	27 Jun 1970
LtCol Francia L. Delaney	14 Sept 1970
Col Edwin M. Jones	23 Jul 1971
Col Gordon D. McPherson	05 Jul 1972
LtCol Walter J. McManua	22 Jun 1973
Col Merton R. Ives	11 Sept 1973
Col Jonny O. Gregerson	20 Aug 1974
Col John K. Hope	26 Jun 1975
Col Ronald M. Proudfoot	27 Apr 1976
Col Hugh R. Bumpas	13 Apr 1977
LtCol Richard C. Yezzi	09 Jun 1978
Col Malcolm S. Jolley Jr.	08 Aug 1978
Col Richard P. Capastosto	02 Aug 1979
LtCol Gerald R. Enos	02 Jul 1980
Col Kenneth W. Langford	29 Sept 1980
Col Leon E. Obenhaus	31 Jul 1981
LtCol Richard H. Griffin	28 Jun 1982
Col Rabun N. Patrick	30 Jul 1982
Col Earnest Jarvis 1	09 Jul 1983
Col Alvin M. Younger	03 Jul 1984
Col Robert F. Gibson	18 Jun 1985
Col Thomas H. Meurer	01 Sept 1987
Col William D. Armstrong Jr.	17 Jan 1989
Col Dennis G. Del Mauro	13 Jul 1990
Col Billy D. McMillin	10 Jul 1992
Col Robert C. Dodt Jr.	25 Mar 1994
Col Robert D. Hughes	13 Sept 1995
Col Jerry S. Anderson Jr.	25 Jul 1997
Col Bradley E. Turner	11 Jun 1999
Col Steven T. Elkins	29 Jun 2001
Col Mark A. King	25 Jul 2003
Col Medio Monti	29 Jul 2005
Col Matthew R. Cicchinelli	28 Jun 2007
Col Dennis A. Crall	15 Jun 2009
Col Dean Patterson	13 May 2011
Col Scott F. Stebbins	23 May 2013
Col Lorna M. Mahlock	05 June 2015
Col Craig R. Doty	24 May 2017
Col Charles E. Smith	29 May 2019
Col Robert J. Guice	28 June 2021
Col Michael D. Hicks	28 June 2023

**SUBORDINATE COMMANDS**

**PERSONNEL SUPPORT DETACHMENT-18**

Officer in Charge ..... Maj Jackson (2025-Pres)  
Executive Officer ..... Capt Meeks (2024-Pres)  
Unit Senior Enlisted Leader..... 1stSgt Mayhew (2025-Pres)

**MARINE AIR SUPPORT SQUADRON-2**

Commanding Officer ..... LtCol Lomdsdale (2025-Pres)  
Executive Officer ..... Maj Kimani (2025-Pres)  
Acting Sergeant Major ..... 1stSgt Sandoval (2025-Pres)

**MARINE AIR CONTROL SQUADRON-4**

Commanding Officer ..... LtCol Holdabaum (2025-Pres)  
Executive Officer ..... Maj Powell (2025-Pres)  
Sergeant Major ..... SgtMaj Gallucci (2024-Pres)

**MARINE WING COMMUNICATIONS**  
**SQUADRON-18**

Commanding Officer ..... LtCol Tuck (2025-Pres)  
Executive Officer ..... Maj Cunningham (2025-Pres)  
Sergeant Major ..... SgtMaj Hernandez (2024-Pres)

**1st LOW ALTITUDE AIR DEFENSE BATTALION**

Commanding Officer ..... LtCol Columbus (2025-Pres)  
Executive Officer ..... Maj Coots (2025-Pres)  
Sergeant Major ..... SgtMaj Turek (2024-Pres)

# COLONEL MICHAEL D. HICKS

## Outgoing Commanding Officer

Colonel Hicks graduated from Coronado High School in El Paso, Texas and enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1988. He served as a diesel mechanic and wrecker operator in Battery N, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines until 1994. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant through the Officer Candidate Course program following his graduation from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1996.

As an air defense control officer, Colonel Hicks has served in all three active duty Marine Air Control Squadrons, including two combat deployments in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM with Marine Air Control Squadron 4 and II Marine Expeditionary Brigade. Billets held include Tactical Air Operations Center Detachment Commander, operations officer at the squadron and group levels, with culmination as the Marine Air Control Squadron 4 Commanding Officer from 2015 through 2017.



Duties in the supporting establishment have included tours as a series commander at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Officer Candidates School Platoon Commander, Tactical Air Operations Center Division Head at Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One, and Air Defense Branch Head at Headquarters Marine Corps Aviation Expeditionary Enablers Branch in the Pentagon. Colonel Hicks also served in the Joint Staff J7 as an operations observer/trainer and the Deployable Training Division Operations Officer.

Colonel Hicks was promoted to his current rank in June 2021 where he served as the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing Inspector General and the III Marine Expeditionary Force Fire and Effects Coordinator. He currently serves as the Marine Air Control Group 18 Commanding Officer.

A graduate of the Command and Control Systems Course and Air War College resident programs, Colonel Hicks' personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star in lieu of second award, and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with gold star in lieu of fourth award.

Colonel Hicks is married to the former Miss Kimberly Casas of El Paso, Texas. They have four children; Megan, Aubrey, Jake, and Peyton and two granddaughters; Amelia and Cora.

# COLONEL JUSTIN M. SANDERS

## Incoming Commanding Officer

Commissioned in 2001 as an Air Support Control Officer, Colonel Sanders deployed with MASS-3 to Iraq in 2003 in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. He also served as the Air Support Element Officer-in-Charge for the 13th MEU, where he directed critical air support operations during a combat deployment to Al Anbar Province.

Selected as a Foreign Area Officer (FAO), Colonel Sanders pursued advanced studies at the Naval Postgraduate School, focusing on the geopolitics of Africa, and completed intensive language training in French. This culminated in a posting in Senegal supporting Marine Forces Africa security cooperation initiatives. However, even with these internationally focused roles, he continued to lead – serving as the Active Duty Officer-in-Charge with MASS-6, overseeing deployments to the Horn of Africa and disaster preparedness exercises.



Colonel Sanders continued to alternate between command and international assignments. He commanded Bravo Company, MASS-3, deploying to Afghanistan in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM and later served as the Squadron Operations Officer and Executive Officer. Intermixed with these assignments, he leveraged his FAO expertise as the Africa & France Issues Officer at Headquarters-Marine Corps, developing policy and advising senior leaders. He further enhanced his international credentials by attending Brazil's Naval Command and Staff College, the NATO Defense College, and by serving as the Deputy Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy in Spain.

Currently serving as the Fires and Effects Coordinator for III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan, Colonel Sanders is preparing to assume command of Marine Air Control Group 18 in June 2025.

Colonel Sanders is a qualified Tactical Air Director, Helicopter Director, Senior Air Director, and Weapons and Tactics Instructor. He has cultivated fluency in multiple languages and holds FAO designations for Africa, Western Europe, and Latin America. His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star in lieu of second award, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with gold star in lieu of third award, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with gold star in lieu of second award and the French National Defense Medal (Médaille de la Défense Nationale, échelon OR).

Colonel Sanders is married to the former Miss Laurie Cross of Indiana. They have three children: Mya, Baron, and Bastian.







## MARINES' HYMN

From the Halls of Montezuma  
To the shores of Tripoli  
We fight our country's battles  
In air, on land, and sea  
First to fight for right and freedom And  
to keep our honor clean  
We are proud to claim the title  
Of United States Marine.

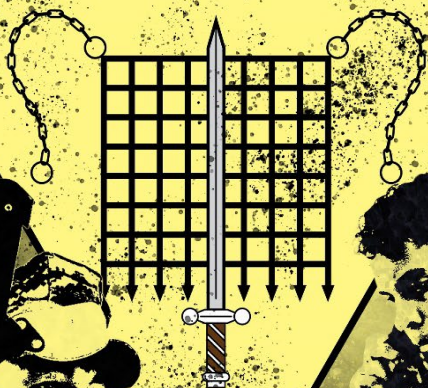
Our flag's unfurled to every breeze  
From dawn to setting sun  
We have fought in every clime and place  
Where we could take a gun  
In the snow of far-off Northern lands  
And in sunny tropic scenes  
You will find us always on the job The  
United States Marines.

Here's health to you and to our Corps  
Which we are proud to serve  
In many a strife we've fought for life  
And never lost our nerve  
If the Army and the Navy  
Ever look on Heaven's scenes  
They will find the streets are guarded By  
United States Marines.





# MARINE AIR CONTROL GROUP



18

## COMMAND AND CONTROL



INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. COMMUNICATE.

