



Rear Admiral Joseph R. Buzzella

Acting Commander Pacific Area

U. S. Coast Guard



Rear Admiral Joseph Buzzella assumed duties as the Acting Commander Pacific Area in July 2025. He serves as the operational commander responsible for all Coast Guard missions westward from the Rocky Mountains across the Indo-Pacific, Arctic and Antarctic regions, to the coast of eastern Africa. He concurrently serves as Commander, Defense Force West and provides Coast Guard operational support to the Department of Defense and Combatant Commanders.

RADM Buzzella previously served as the Commander, Southwest District. As such, he led Coast Guard operations from the California-Oregon border to Chile including Arizona, Utah, and Nevada. Prior to that he served as the J-7 Director of Force Development, United States Cyber Command.



RADM Buzzella completed Coast Guard Enlisted Basic Training at Cape May, New Jersey in 1986 after serving in recruit company Bravo 123. After boot camp, he was assigned to Coast Guard Base Miami Beach as a Coast Guard Reservist. He is a 1988 graduate of the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) and a 1992 graduate of the Coast Guard Academy where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Management and a Coast Guard officer commission. Following graduation, he served as a Deck Watch Officer aboard the USCGC Spencer and USCGC Vindicator. Upon completion of U.S. Naval Flight Training in Pensacola, Florida, he was designated Naval Aviator 23,901 and Coast Guard Aviator 3,293 in 1996.

He then reported to Coast Guard Air Station Miami, Florida where he flew the HH-65 Dauphin Helicopter and later the HU-25 Falcon Jet where he maintained dual airframe qualifications. In 2000, he was assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod, Massachusetts where he flew HU-25 Falcon Jets. In 2005, he was assigned under the Department of Homeland Security Chief Financial Officer in Washington D.C., where he served as an Assistant Director and Budget Program Reviewer providing oversight of more than \$26 billion in annual appropriations. In 2007, he reported to Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco, California where he held the positions of Operations Officer and Executive Officer and flew the MH-65 Helicopter. In 2011, he was assigned as Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City, Michigan where he flew the MH-65 Helicopter. In 2014, RADM Buzzella reported to the Pentagon as Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Director of the Chairman's Action Group (CAG) under General Martin Dempsey, USA and General Joseph Dunford, USMC. In 2016, he was assigned as the Sector Commander of Coast Guard Sector-Air Station San Diego,

California where he flew the MH-60 Jayhawk Helicopter, he also served as Captain of the Port of San Diego and led mission execution from the US-Mexico Maritime Border northward to Dana Point, California to include inland navigable Lakes and the Colorado River. In 2019, he was assigned as the Chief of Staff for the Eleventh Coast Guard District as the principle advisor to the District Commander. From 2021-22 he served as the Chief, Coast Guard Office of Emerging Policy (DCO-X).

RADM Buzzella holds a Master in National Security Strategy from the National War College, a Master in Public Administration from Harvard University, and a Master of Science in Quality Systems Management with a specialization in Homeland Security from the National Graduate School. He is a former Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government Public Service Fellow. RADM Buzzella holds numerous awards and recognitions. He hails from Miami, Florida and is married with 3 children.