



Vice Admiral Joseph Buzzella

United States Coast Guard Commander

Pacific Area and Defense Force West



Vice Admiral Joseph Buzzella assumed his duties as Commander, Pacific Area on March 26th, 2026. He previously served as the Acting Commander since July 18th, 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 the Commander, Defense Force West and provides Coast Guard operational support to the Department of War.

VADM Buzzella's previous flag assignments include Commander, Coast Guard Southwest District, and the Director of Force Development (J-7), U.S. Cyber Command.

VADM Buzzella is a career aviator flying multiple aircrafts including the HH-65 Dolphin Helicopter, HU-25 Falcon Jet, MH-65 Dolphin Helicopter, and MH-60 Jayhawk Helicopter. He has served at numerous air stations throughout his career to include: Coast Guard Air Station Miami, Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod, Coast Guard Air Station San Francisco, and Command of Coast Guard Air Station Traverse City. Additionally, he served as the Sector Commander of Coast Guard Sector-Air Station San Diego, where he was also the Captain of the Port.

VADM Buzzella has served in various staff tours including Assistant Director and Budget Program Reviewer; Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Director of the Chairman's Action Group; Chief of Staff for the Eleventh (now Southwest) Coast Guard District; and Chief of the Coast Guard Office of Emerging Policy and Strategic Foresight (DCO-X).

VADM Buzzella holds a Master's in National Security Strategy from the National War College, a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University, and a Master's in Quality Systems Management specializing in Homeland Security from the National Graduate School. He is a former Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government Public Service Fellow.

VADM Buzzella began his Coast Guard career as part of Recruit Company Bravo-123. He graduated from Coast Guard Enlisted Basic Training at Cape May, New Jersey in 1986 and served as a reservist at Coast Guard Group Miami. He was then selected to attend the Naval Academy Preparatory School and subsequently graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1992. Following graduation, he served as a Deck Watch Officer aboard the CGC *Spencer* and CGC *Vindicator*, and was designated as Coast Guard Aviator Number 3293 after completing U.S. Naval Flight Training in 1996.

VADM Buzzella originally hails from Miami, Florida and is married with three children.