



Rear Admiral Lower Half Joanna Hiigel
Deputy Commander
U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area



RDML Joanna Hiigel currently serves as Deputy Commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area and Commander, Coast Guard Task Force-Artic. She previously served as Trident Forge Director, Operation Vigilant Sentry Incident Commander, and Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS) Senior Reserve Officer. In 2022, she served as USCG Pacific Area Senior Reserve Officer leading 1,500 Reserve Personnel. RDML Hiigel graduated from the United States Coast Guard Academy in 1995 and reported to USCGC ACTIVE in Port Angeles, WA where she served as Officer of the Deck (OOD), Boarding Officer, Weapons Officer, and First Lieutenant.



In 1997, RDML Hiigel reported to Tactical Law Enforcement Team (TACLET) Gulf where she served as the Officer-In-Charge of Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 8B deploying with US and Dutch Naval vessels with a follow-on tour at Group Seattle as the Assistant Operations Officer.

In 2000, RDML Hiigel transitioned into the USCG Reserve and served at Group/Air Station Port Angeles, WA, followed by Air Station Borinquen in Aguadilla, PR and Sector Mobile, AL. In 2009, RDML Hiigel transferred to Alameda, CA where she completed Active-Duty orders in support of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response and the commissioning of USCGC STRATTON with a follow-on tour at Sector Columbia River in Astoria, OR as the Senior Reserve Officer.

In 2015, RDML Hiigel transferred to US Indo Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM) in Hawaii. She supported the annual BAKAMLA joint exercise in Indonesia, served as liaison to an Australian government official during a bilateral exercise and completed Active-Duty Incident Commander duties in support of Sector New York dielectric oil spill and Incident Management for Coast Guard District Seven following the 2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

From 2017-2019, RDML Hiigel served as the District Thirteen Reserve Chief of Staff leading 350 Pacific Northwest Reserve Personnel. She deployed in support of Hurricane Lane, US INDOPACOM and US SOUTHCOM exercises, as well as WestPac missions in the Philippines.

In 2019-2021, RDML Hiigel led Coast Guard Reserve Unit, US Transportation Command as the Commanding Officer. While there, she deployed in support of global COVID-19 Response operations as well as Operation Allies Welcome.

RDML Hiigel earned a Master of Arts degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Military University, Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from the United States Coast Guard Academy and is a graduate from Naval War College with Joint Professional Military Education. She earned Type 1 Incident Commander, Liaison Officer, and Type 3 Planning Section Chief Incident Management qualifications. Military decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Coast Guard Commendation Medal (three awards), Coast Guard Achievement Medal (five awards), and Coast Guard Expert Pistol Medal.
