

# LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER E. BUCHANAN III

Retired April 1, 2006.

Lt. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III is Commander, 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces, Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. The command comprises four wings in the eastern United States and four direct reporting units, with more than 350 aircraft and 24,000 active-duty and civilian personnel. He is also responsible for the operational readiness of 18 9th Air Force-gained National Guard and Air Force Reserve units comprising the Air Reserve component. As the Air Component Commander for U.S. Central Command, the general is responsible for developing contingency plans and conducting air operations in a 27-nation area of responsibility covering Central and Southwest Asia and the Horn of Africa.

General Buchanan, commissioned through the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1972, earned his pilot wings in August 1973 at Sheppard AFB, Texas, and began his flying career as a T-38 instructor pilot at Columbus AFB, Miss. In subsequent assignments he was assigned to Germany, Iceland, the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where he served in numerous operational, command and staff positions. The general has commanded at the squadron, group, wing and joint task force levels, and was the Commander of Air Force Recruiting Service. His staff tours include assignments to Headquarters Tactical Air Command, Headquarters Air Force, the Joint Staff, and as Deputy Director of Allied Command Europe Reaction Force Air Staff, NATO.

Prior to assuming his current duties, General Buchanan served as Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander, U.S. Central Command, and the Commander of Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. He conducted the day-to-day execution of air operations in support of the war in Afghanistan and enforcement of the southern no-fly zone over Iraq. As the Deputy Commander of Air Force Forces in Southwest Asia, he was responsible for the bed-down and provisioning of aircraft and Airmen in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom and remained the DCOMAFFOR throughout the major combat operations phase, playing a key role in the day-to-day planning and execution of airpower operations. During his two-and-a-half years as Combined Forces Air Component Commander and Commander of Air Force Forces, USCENCOM, he was responsible for planning and executing airpower operations in the USCENCOM area of responsibility. He provided airlift, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; search and rescue; and close air support for operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom as well as Combined/Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa. The general is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flight hours.

## EDUCATION

1972 Bachelor of Science degree in life science, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.  
1978 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.  
1979 Master's degree in management, Troy State University  
1984 Distinguished graduate, Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.  
1992 National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.  
1997 Senior Executives in National and International Security, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.  
2001 National Security Leadership Course, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, N.Y.

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 1972 - August 1973, student pilot, Sheppard AFB, Texas
2. September 1973 - December 1973, T-38 instructor pilot training, Randolph AFB, Texas
3. January 1974 - September 1976, T-38 instructor pilot, 50th Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss.
4. February 1977 - December 1979, OV-10 forward air controller and flight examiner, 704th Tactical Air Support Squadron, Sembach Air Base, West Germany
5. March 1980 - September 1980, F-4 pilot training, 308th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Homestead AFB, Fla.
6. October 1980 - June 1983, F-4 instructor pilot and flight commander, 68th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Moody AFB, Ga.
7. June 1983 - May 1984, flight commander and Chief of Standardization and Evaluation, 57th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Keflavik Naval Station, Iceland
8. June 1984 - June 1985, student, Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.
9. June 1985 - November 1987, action officer and Chief, Joint Doctrine Division, Headquarters TAC, Langley AFB, Va.
10. December 1987 - December 1988, AT-38 lead-in fighter training instructor pilot and operations officer, 433rd Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Holloman AFB, N.M.
11. December 1988 - October 1990, Commander, 436th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Holloman AFB, N.M.
12. October 1990 - July 1991, Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations, 478th Tactical Training Wing, Holloman AFB, N.M.
13. August 1991 - June 1992, student, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
14. July 1992 - April 1993, Commander, 48th Support Group, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England
15. April 1993 - June 1994, Vice Commander, 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, England
16. June 1994 - September 1995, Chief, Joint Operations Division, U.S. European Command and U.S. Central Command Branch, the Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.
17. September 1995 - April 1996, Deputy for Current Plans, the Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.
18. May 1996 - September 1997, Commander and Director, Air Force Recruiting Service, Randolph AFB, Texas
19. October 1997 - December 1998, Deputy Director, Allied Command Europe Reaction Force Air Staff, NATO, Kalkar, Germany
20. December 1998 - August 2000, Commander, 325th Fighter Wing, Tyndal AFB, Fla.
21. September 2000 - October 2000, special assistant to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.
22. November 2000 - April 2002, Director of Operations and Training, Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.
23. April 2002 - July 2002, Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, and Commander, 9th Aerospace Expeditionary Task Force Southwest Asia, U.S. Central Command, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander for U.S. Central Command
24. July 2002 - May 2003, Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander, U.S. Central Command; Commander, Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia; and Vice Commander, 9th Air Expeditionary Task Force, U.S. Central Command, Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia
25. August 2003 - April 2006, Commander, 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces, Shaw AFB, S.C.

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command pilot  
Flight hours: More than 3,800  
Aircraft flown: F-15C/D/E, F-4, OV-10, AT-38B and T-38

## MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Distinguished Service Medal  
Distinguished Service Medal  
Defense Superior Service Medal  
Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster  
Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters  
Air Medal  
Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster

## EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant June 7, 1972  
First Lieutenant June 7, 1974  
Captain June 7, 1976  
Major Oct. 1, 1983  
Lieutenant Colonel March 1, 1986  
Colonel Dec. 1, 1991  
Brigadier General April 1, 1997  
Major General July 1, 2000  
Lieutenant General Oct. 1, 2003

(Current as of February 2006)

