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## *A Brief History Of U.S. Fleet Forces Command*

**U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM)** was originally established as Commander In Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANTFLT). CINCLANTFLT was established under one command in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt.

**The Fleet concept** came into being following the Spanish-American War when new bases acquired in the Caribbean and the Pacific were considered useless unless protected by an adequate fleet.

**President Roosevelt** placed great emphasis on naval readiness for war. During his first administration, from 1901 to 1905, authorization was obtained from Congress for 10 new battleships, four armored cruisers and 17 smaller craft. All battleships were assigned to the Atlantic Fleet and all armored cruisers and lighter cruisers were assigned to the newly created Pacific Fleet.

**The first Commander in Chief** of the Atlantic Fleet was Rear Admiral Robley D. Evans, who assumed command on 1 January 1906 aboard his flagship the battleship USS MAINE (BB 10).

**In December 1907**, Rear Admiral Evans led the fleet of 16 first line battleships out of Hampton Roads on the start of the famous world cruise of the Great White Fleet (1907-1909). President Roosevelt witnessed the departure from his yacht MAYFLOWER. This ceremonious Fleet Review served as a highlight of the Jamestown Exposition, then held at the site of the present Norfolk Naval Station.

**History indicates a continuous use of the title "Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet"** from 1906 until 1923 and again from 1941 to 2002. In a reorganization of the United States Fleet in 1923, that title was abolished and the title "Commander Scouting Force" was used. On 1 February 1941, General Order 143 reestablished the title and reorganized the United States Fleet into three separate fleets (Atlantic, Pacific and Asiatic). The Order further stated each fleet would be under the command of a full admiral. On 1 February 1941, Rear Admiral Ernest J. King, in his flagship USS TEXAS (BB 35) at Culebra, Puerto Rico, hauled down his two-star flag and hoisted his four-star flag as Commander in Chief, United States Atlantic Fleet.

**From April 1941 to April 1948**, four flagships served as headquarters for the Fleet Commander in Chief: USS AUGUSTA (CA 31) from April 1941 to January 1942; the historic spar-decked corvette/sloop USS CONSTELLATION (launched in 1855) from January 1942 to August 1942; USS VIXEN (PG 53) from August 1942 to May 1946; and USS POCONO (AGC 16) from May 1946 to April 1948. On 5 April 1948, the Headquarters moved ashore into spaces of the former U.S. Navy Hospital, Norfolk, where it has remained.

**After the end of World War II**, the organization of the United States Armed Forces was reviewed with a view toward reorganization after the turbulent war years. On 1 December 1947, under a reorganization act of the Armed Forces approved by Congress, the unified United States Atlantic Command was established, with headquarters co-located to those of U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Admiral William H.P. Blandy, USN, Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, became the first Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command, a title that remained dual-hatted (and would later become triple-hatted) until another reorganization of the Armed Forces in 1985, the Goldwater-Nichols Act, separated U.S. Atlantic Command from U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

**In the early 1950s**, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) decided to establish a new major command, that of Allied Command, Atlantic, under the command of a U.S. four-star admiral with headquarters in Norfolk, VA. Since this was primarily a naval command responsible for allied defense of the North Atlantic, the decision was made to co-locate this organization with that of U.S. Atlantic Command and U.S. Atlantic Fleet, to form a tri-hatted command. On 10 April 1952, Admiral Lynde D. McCormick, USN, Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command and U.S. Atlantic Fleet, assumed the title as the first Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. Like U.S. Atlantic Command, Allied Command Atlantic, remained intact and part of a tri-hatted command organization until a Congressionally mandated reorganization of the U.S. Armed Forces occurred in 1985, which separated command of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet from the other two commands with its own four-star admiral. Admiral Wesley L. McDonald, USN, was the last U.S. Navy admiral to command all three organizations at the same time. He relinquished command of U.S. Atlantic Fleet to Admiral Carlisle A. H. Trost, USN, on 4 October 1985.

**Under the 1985 reorganization** of the U.S. Armed Forces, the admiral filling the post of Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, would also fill the position of Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command. This role for CINCLANTFLT continued until the Secretary of Defense, in 1986, approved a separate billet for the Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command. On 16 September 1986, Admiral Frank B. Kelso II, USN, relinquished the Deputy USCINCLANT post to Major General Thomas G. Darling, USAF.

**From 1 February 1991 to 17 February 2000**, the Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet was the naval component commander for the unified Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, assuming responsibility for all U.S. Navy operational and training matters in the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility. On 17 February 2000, these responsibilities were reassigned to the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command (formerly Commander, South Atlantic Force), assuming naval component commander duties for the unified USSOUTHCOM. However, COMUSNAVSO does not have any permanently assigned afloat forces. CINCLANTFLT, at the direction of USJFCOM (formerly USCINCLANT), remains the major force provider for USNAVSO for forces attached in support of USSOUTHCOM operations and exercises.

**On 1 June 1992**, the Commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet became the naval component commander for the Commander in Chief, U.S. Strategic Command, assuming responsibility for all U.S. Navy operational and training matters under USSTRATCOM.

**On 1 October 2001**, the Chief of Naval Operations designated CINCLANTFLT as concurrent Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM); a new command responsible for overall coordination, establishment, and implementation of

integrated requirements and policies for manning, equipping, and training Atlantic and Pacific Fleet units during the inter-deployment training cycle.

**On 1 October 2002**, COMUSFLTFORCOM became the Naval component commander for the newly-formed U.S. Northern Command, assuming responsibility for all U.S. Navy operational and training matters under Commander, U.S. Northern Command.

**On 24 October 2002**, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld directed that the title of "Commander in Chief" be reserved solely for the President of the United States. In a message to Naval Commanders in Chief, the Chief of Naval Operations directed a change of title to that of "Commander." This change affected the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and U.S. Naval Forces Europe.

**On 23 May 2006**, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) issued OPNAV NOTICE 3111, Ser DNS-33/6U827232, that disestablished the Commander, Fleet Forces Command (COMFLTFORCOM) and Commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (COMLANTFLT) and renamed COMLANTFLT to Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (COMUSFLTFORCOM), ordered to carry out the missions currently performed by COMFLTFORCOM and COMLANTFLT and serve as primary advocate for fleet personnel, training, requirements, maintenance, and operational issues, reporting administratively directly to the CNO as an Echelon 2 command. All forces reporting to COMLANTFLT or COMFLTFORCOM will now report to COMUSFLTFORCOM effectively immediately.

**On 31 October 2006**, a ceremony was held to officially mark the transition of the United States Atlantic Fleet and Fleet Forces Command to the United States Fleet Forces Command. Three of the 37 previous admirals who held the top post in the Atlantic fleet attended the ceremony, held aboard the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). The command will henceforth be known as Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

<b>PAST COMMANDERS IN CHIEF, U.S. ATLANTIC FLEET</b>
<b>Rear Admiral Robley D. Evans Mar 1905-May 1908</b>
<b>Rear Admiral Charles S. Sperry May 1908-Mar 1909</b>
<b>Rear Admiral Seaton Schroeder Mar 1909-Jun 1911</b>
<b>Rear Admiral Hugo W. Osterhaus Jun 1911-Jan 1913</b>
<b>Rear Admiral Charles J. Badger Jan 1913-Sep 1914</b>
<b>Rear Admiral (promoted to Admiral in 1915) Frank F. Fletcher Sep 1914-Jun 1916</b>
<b>Admiral Henry T. Mayo Jun 1916-Jul 1919</b>
<b>Admiral Henry B. Wilson Jul 1919-Jun 1921</b>
<b>Admiral Hilary P. Jones Jun 1921-Dec 1922</b>

*History shows a continuation of the title Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet, until late 1922 when the title Commander Scouting Force was used. No further utilization of the title was made until 1 February 1941, when the United States Fleet was reorganized to form the U.S. Atlantic, U.S. Pacific and U.S. Asiatic Fleets, each with a four-star commander in chief.*

<b>Admiral Ernest J. King 01 Feb 1941-30 Dec 1941</b>
<b>Admiral Royal E. Ingersoll 30 Dec 1941-15 Nov 1944</b>
<b>Admiral Jonas H. Ingram 15 Nov 1944-26 Sep 1946</b>
<b>Admiral Marc A. Mitscher 26 Sep 1946-03 Feb 1947</b>
<b>Admiral William H.P. Blandy * 03 Feb 1947-01 Feb 1950</b>
<b>Admiral William M. Fechteler * 01 Feb 1950-15 Aug 1951</b>
<b>Admiral Lynde D. McCormick ** 15 Aug 1951-12 Apr 1954</b>
<b>Admiral Jerauld Wright ** 12 Apr 1954-28 Feb 1960</b>
<b>Admiral Robert L. Dennison ** 28 Feb 1960-30 Apr 1963</b>
<b>Admiral Harold P. Smith ** 30 Apr 1963-30 Apr 1965</b>
<b>Admiral Thomas H. Moorer ** 30 Apr 1965-17 Jun 1967</b>
<b>Admiral Ephraim P. Holmes ** 17 Jun 1967-30 Sep 1970</b>
<b>Admiral Charles K. Duncan ** 30 Sep 1970-31 Oct 1972</b>
<b>Admiral Ralph W. Cousins ** 31 Oct 1972-30 May 1975</b>
<b>Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, Jr. ** 30 May 1975-30 Sep 1978</b>
<b>Admiral Harry D. Train, II ** 30 Sep 1978-30 Sep 1982</b>
<b>Admiral Wesley L. McDonald ** 30 Sep 1982-04 Oct 1985</b>
<b>Admiral Carlisle A. H. Trost *** 04 Oct 1985-30 Jun 1986</b>
<b>Admiral Frank B. Kelso, II *** 30 Jun 1986-04 Nov 1988</b>
<b>Admiral Powell F. Carter, Jr. 04 Nov 1988-31 Jan 1991</b>
<b>Admiral Paul David Miller 31 Jan 1991-13 Jul 1992</b>
<b>Admiral Henry H. Mauz, Jr. 13 Jul 1992-05 Oct 1994</b>
<b>Admiral William J. Flanagan, Jr. 05 Oct 1994-20 Dec 1996</b>
<b>Admiral J. Paul Reason 20 Dec 1996 -17 Sep 1999</b>
<b>Admiral Vern Clark 17 Sep 1999 - 23 June 2000</b>
<b>Admiral Robert J. Natter # 23 June 2000 - 24 Oct 2002</b>

*The title of Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet was in continuous use from February 1941 through 24 October 2002. In October 2002, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld*

directed that the title of "Commander in Chief" be reserved solely for the President of the United States. In a message to Naval Commanders in Chief, the Chief of Naval Operations directed a change of title to that of "Commander." Accordingly, on 24 October 2002 the title of Commander in Chief was discontinued and the title of Commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet was established.

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<b>PAST COMMANDERS, U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND COMMANDERS, U.S. ATLANTIC FLEET</b>
<b>Admiral Robert J. Natter 24 Oct 2002 - 3 Oct 2003</b>
<b>Admiral William J. Fallon 3 Oct 2003 - 18 Feb 2005</b>
<b>Admiral John B. Nathman 18 Feb 2005 - 22 May 2006</b>

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- \* In addition, served as Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command.
  - \*\* In addition, served as Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command, and Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (a NATO post).
  - \*\*\* In addition, served as Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command. ADM Kelso relinquished this position on 16 Sep 86
  - # In addition, as of 1 October 2002, served as Commander, Fleet Forces Command.
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<b>PAST COMMANDERS, U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND</b>
<b>Admiral John B. Nathman 23 May 2006 - 16 May 2007</b>
<b>Admiral Gary Roughead 17 May 2007 - 28 Sep 2007</b>
<b>Admiral Jonathan W. Greenert 29 Sep 2007 - 23 July 2009</b>

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<b>COMMANDER, U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND</b>
<b>Admiral John C. Harvey, Jr. - 24 July to Present</b>

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