

BIOGRAPHY OF REAR-ADMIRAL DIDIER PIATON, FRENCH NAVY



Born on 19 May 1964 in Lyon, he entered the French Naval Academy in September 1983.

After a first assignment in the Indian Ocean in 1986 on the corvette *Doudart de Lagrée* based in Djibouti, he joined the courses in naval aviation.

Graduated helicopters pilot in 1989, specialized on *Lynx* of 31F Helicopter Squadron. Successively assigned on frigate *Montcalm*, *Cassard* then *Dupleix*, he took part, with his helicopter detachment, in the operations of the first Gulf War in August 1990 and several coalition operations in Somalia, in the Persian Gulf and in the Adriatic Sea.

In 1994, he served as head of the helicopter detachment of 35F Helicopter Squadron aboard the school ship for naval officers school group, *Jeanne d'Arc*.

He was appointed executive officer from 1995 to 1997 of a new unit, the 36F Helicopter Squadron, which brought the new ASUW *Panther* helicopters into service for French Navy to arm overseas surveillance ship (type *Floreal*), new stealth frigate (type *Lafayette*) and replace the ASW *Lynx* on board frigate (type *Cassard*). He exercises command of this Helicopter Squadron from 1997 to 1999.

After graduating the War College in 2000, he was assigned to the Joint Military Staff in Paris from 2000 to 2003 where he carried out duties for the Politic and Strategic Studies Office, with specific regards to the NATO and EU led operations in the Balkans.

Between 2003 and 2010, he was mainly serving at sea, first as the executive officer of the destroyer *Montcalm*, before he assumed the command of the frigate *Ventôse* in 2004, based in the french West Indies.

In July 2006, he completed his staff tours by being assigned to the Saint-Mandrier Naval Instruction Center as the Director of the Officers Training where he was responsible for the operational training of French and foreign surface warfare officers.

In 2007 he became executive officer aboard the newly commissioned LHD *Tonnerre* (*Mistral* class) and then assumed command of the LHD *Mistral* from July 2008 to August 2010.

During this whole period, he mainly led operations against narcotics trafficking, cooperation and crisis prevention in the Gulf of Guinea, emergency interventions (including research consecutively to the crash of the Rio-Paris flight in 2009).

After attending the 117th session of the NATO Defense College Senior Course (Rome, 2010-2011), he was appointed head of the office in charge of human resources of the Fleet (crew and petty officers) to the Director of Navy Military Personnel in Paris from 2011 to 2014. He served as PAO and spokesman to the Chief of Staff of the French Navy between 2014 and 2016.

On 1st September 2016, Rear-Admiral Piaton becomes the Joint Commander of the French Naval Forces deployed in the Indian Ocean and of the French Joint Forces stationed in the United Arab Emirates.

He holds various decorations and awards, including Knight of the Legion of Honor, the Military Valor Cross, the Overseas Medal (Middle East and Somalia clasps), the Naval Aeronautic Medal and other French and foreign awards.

Rear-Admiral Didier Piaton is married to Dominique.