



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COLONEL JAMES FINLAYSON

Colonel James “Cobra” Finlayson is the Commander, Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick Space Force Base, Fla. AFTAC operates and maintains the United States Atomic Energy Detection System to monitor foreign compliance with various treaties limiting nuclear testing. The focus of AFTAC’s more than 1,000 professionals is to detect special events in the atmosphere, underwater, underground, and in space to determine if they are nuclear and to report them to U.S. senior decision makers.

Colonel Finlayson received his commission in 1997 from the United States Air Force Academy. Prior to assuming command of the Department of Defense’s sole nuclear treaty monitoring center, Colonel Finlayson was the Vice Commander of the 17th Training Wing at Goodfellow AFB, Texas, serving as the principal assistant to the Wing Commander and overseeing two training groups, a mission support group, and a medical group. He also directed 13 wing staff agencies and managed \$1.5 billion in real property, equipment, supplies and contracts. Additionally, Colonel Finlayson served as the Chief of Staff, J2 Directorate for Intelligence, U.S. Strategic Command located at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. Previous leadership assignments include serving as the Commander of National Air and Space Intelligence Center’s Regional Threats Analysis Squadron and as the Director of Operations for U.S. Strategic Command’s Joint Intelligence Operations Center. He has forward deployed on five occasions to Egypt, Qatar, Iraq, and Afghanistan in support of Operations Bright Star, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.



EDUCATION

1997 Bachelor of Science, History, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
2000 Professional Masters of Business Administration, Troy University, Troy, Alabama
2002 Squadron Officer’s School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2006 Air Command and Staff College, by correspondence
2008 Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, Boyd School of Law, University of Nevada Las Vegas
2010 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2011 Air War College, by correspondence
2016 Doctor of Philosophy, *summa cum laude*, Organizational Development and Leadership, University of the Rockies, Denver, Colo.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. May 1997 - June 1998, Admissions Advisor, Directorate of Admissions, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
2. June 1998 - March 1999, Student, 315th Technical Training Squadron, Goodfellow AFB, Texas
3. March 1999 - May 2001, Chief, Intelligence, 9th Fighter Squadron, Holloman AFB, N.M.

4. May 2001 - December 2003, Command Briefer/Analyst, U.S. Central Command, Tampa, Fla.
5. December 2003 - January 2007, Flight Commander, 547th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron, Nellis AFB, Nev.
6. January 2007 - July 2009, Operations Officer, Functional Analysis Division, Security and Intelligence Directorate, U.S. Southern Command, Miami, Fla.
7. July 2009 - July 2010, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
8. July 2010 - July 2012, Wing Senior Intelligence Officer, 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa Air Base, Japan
9. July 2012 - July 2015, Deputy Division Chief, Targeting, Joint Staff J2, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
10. July 2015 - July 2017, Commander, Regional Threats Analysis Squadron, NASIC, Wright-Patterson, Ohio
11. July 2017 - July 2018, Deputy Commander, 365th ISR Group, Nellis AFB, Nev.
12. July 2018 - July 2019, Director of Operations, U.S. Strategic Command, JIOC, Offutt AFB, Neb.
13. July 2019 - May 2020, Chief of Staff, J2 Directorate for Intelligence, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.
14. May 2020 – May 2022, Vice Commander, 17th Training Wing, Goodfellow AFB, Texas
15. June 2022 – Present, Commander, Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick SFB, Fla.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

May 2001 - December 2003, USCENTCOM, Tampa, Fla., as a captain

January 2007 - July 2009, USSOUTHCOM, Miami, Fla., as a major

July 2012 - July 2015, Joint Staff J2, Pentagon, Washington, D.C., as a lieutenant colonel

July 2019 - May 2020, USSTRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb., as a colonel

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Superior Service Medal

Legion of Merit

Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters

Joint Service Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal

Joint Service Achievement Medal

Air Force Achievement Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant May 28, 1997

First Lieutenant May 28, 1999

Captain May 28, 2001

Major Dec. 1, 2006

Lieutenant Colonel March 1, 2012

Colonel Sept. 1, 2018

(Current as of June 2022)