

# Richard (Rich) M. Whitaker

Rich has served for more than 40 years as a legal and compliance advisor for the United States Department of Defense. He currently serves as Director, Command Operations Review Board for the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), where he provides advice and oversight over some of our nations' most sensitive operations and activities. Previous to his current position, he served as the Staff Judge Advocate (General Counsel) for USSOCOM, the 101st Airborne Division, and the 1st Calvary Division. Notably, he also served as senior operational law observer- trainer at the U. S. Army's Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), where he trained hundreds of military commanders and their judge advocates on the law of armed conflict and interagency coordination. Rich deployed to Iraq in both 1990 and 2003, in support of Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom, respectively, and spent nearly two years in country during those two conflicts. He began his military career as a second lieutenant in the field artillery, after graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1982. He thereafter graduated from The University of Tennessee College of Law in 1985 and began his career as a judge advocate. In 1994, he earned a post-doctorate Master of Law in International Law and taught Operational and International Law at The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School from 1994 to 1997. He earned an additional Master of Art degree in Strategic Studies in 2006, from the U.S. Army War College. He has published numerous articles and books on the topics dealing with operational, intelligence, and international law. Rich retired from active duty in 2011, as a colonel, and began his civilian career that same year. Notably involved in local Tampa youth civic events, Rich was selected as the Tampa Military Citizen of the Year in 2007 by the City of Tampa. His military awards and badges include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal with service star, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with two battle stars, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Medal, The Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, the Liberation of Kuwait Medal, the Liberation of Saudi Arabia Medal, and the Air Assault Badge. He is also entitled to wear as permanent unit awards the Valorous Unit Citation and the Meritorious Unit Commendation for his war-time service with the 101st Airborne Division. Rich has been very happily married to the former Barbara Stanley for the past 40 years; the couple resides in Clearwater, Florida, and have three grown children, Major Kimberlyn "Kim" Whitaker, Mrs. Lauren Low, and Captain Richard "Jack" Whitaker.

