

Col Joe Perlak

Colonel Joe Perlak entered the Marine Corps in 1988 through the Platoon Leaders Class (PLC) program following graduation from the College of the Holy Cross. He received a J.D. from Western New England College School of Law in 1991.

Completing The Basic School and Naval Justice School in 1992, 1stLt Perlak was assigned to Okinawa, Japan, deploying to the Republic of Korea twice in support of III Marine Expeditionary Force and to Thailand aboard USS BELLEAU WOOD with 9th Marines. Captain Perlak was then assigned to Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, SC from 1994-96, serving in several billets. From 1996-99, he served as Special Assistant to the Counsel for the Commandant of the Marine Corps at the Pentagon.

In 1999 Major Perlak was assigned to the Deputy Chief of Staff, (Operations), U.S. Army, as a United Nations Military Observer in the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, observing and reporting violations of the ceasefire mandate. Next assigned to Marine Corps Base, Quantico, VA, he supported the Office of Counsel and the Deputy Chief of Staff, (G-3), as a special project officer. In 2000 he reported as a student in the 49th Graduate Course at the Judge Advocate General's School, U.S. Army, Charlottesville, VA. In 2001 he received his LL.M. with dual specialization in International/Operational law and Contract/Fiscal law. He then reported to Marine Corps Systems Command, Quantico, VA, and served as counsel to several programs and assisted in numerous wartime procurements. He had three extended tours away from SYSCOM, serving as the War Plans Officer, (G-5), COMUSMARCENT, Tampa, FL 2002; and twice as a contingency contracting attorney in Operations Iraqi Freedom 2003 and Secure Tomorrow (Haiti), 2004.

As a Lieutenant Colonel, he served from 2004-6 at the Navy-Marine Corps Appellate Review Activity, Washington, DC, as the Deputy Director of the Appellate Defense Division, (Code 45), managing the largest appellate military justice docket in the Department of Defense and eliminating a historic backlog. In 2006, he deployed to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom as an operational analyst for the US Joint Forces Command. From 2006 through 2009, he was assigned to the US European Command, Stuttgart, Germany, first as the chief of administrative and civil law and for two years as the chief of operational law.

In 2009 he reported to the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals, Washington, DC, where he was promoted to Colonel. Appointed a Senior Judge of the court in 2012, he departed the court in July of 2013, serving his final year as the Chief Judge. During this tour, the Secretary of Defense also appointed him an appellate judge on the United States Court of Military Commission Review and he departed that court as the Presiding Judge of Panel 3. He was appointed to his current duties as Chief Defense Counsel of the Marine Corps on 31 July 2013 and is responsible for the provision of defense services throughout the Marine Corps.