

Vice Admiral Dougherty Takes Command of NAVAIR



From Naval Air Systems Command, Aug 1, 2025

NAS PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – Vice Adm. John “Doc” Dougherty, IV assumed command of the Naval Air Systems Command Aug. 1. Dougherty relieved Vice Adm. Carl Chebi, who retired after 38 years of distinguished naval service.

Under Chebi’s leadership, NAVAIR achieved and sustained the highest readiness levels in the history of naval aviation, identified over \$3 billion in savings to reinvest in naval aviation priorities, and delivered capabilities that are changing the way the naval aviation trains and fights.

“I’m incredibly proud of the NAVAIR team’s dedication to delivering the capabilities the fleet needs, when they need them,” said Chebi. “I have full confidence Doc will lead this exceptional workforce to deliver next-level capabilities and readiness for our warfighters.”

Dougherty brings a powerful combination of acquisition and technical experience to his new role, having served as commander of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division and NAVAIR Chief Engineer.

In his first message to the workforce, Dougherty outlined NAVAIR's "playbook" for delivering readiness and capability—emphasizing a "fleet first" approach to advancing operational readiness and effectiveness, prioritizing speed, executing with precision, tracking performance and owning results and building trust to align efforts and enable data-informed decisions at the lowest levels.

A Harrisburg, Pennsylvania native, Dougherty graduated from United States Naval Academy in 1995 and holds both a Master of Business Administration and Master of Systems Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School. Dougherty's extensive background includes operational tours flying the F/A-18C Hornet with over 1,200 flight hours and 300 carrier landings, followed by senior acquisition roles managing critical programs including Precision Strike Weapons, F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, and the Navy's Next Generation Air Dominance Program.

"It's a privilege to lead this talented team as we continue advancing naval aviation capabilities and readiness," Dougherty said. "Our success is measured by the fleet's success, and that mindset will continue to drive our priorities moving forward."