



United States Navy Biography

Commander Karen J. Sankes-Ritland Commanding Officer, Transient Personnel Unit Norfolk

Commander Karen J. Sankes-Ritland is a native of Jacksonville, North Carolina. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the United States Naval Academy (2000), a Master of Science in Human Systems Integration from the Naval Postgraduate School, and is a certified Professional in Human Resources. She completed Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phases I and II. As a Navy Human Resources Officer, her assignments were in training and education, management, as well as manpower and requirements.



Sankes-Ritland began her career as a Surface Warfare Officer in Norfolk, VA, serving onboard the USS KEARSARGE (LHD 3) as the Operations Intelligence Division Officer and Data Systems Division Officer. She then transferred to Pearl Harbor, HI, where she served onboard the USS REUBEN JAMES (FFG-57) as the Training Officer. After two sea tours, she executed orders at Naval Support Activity, Bahrain, where she served as the Support Services Officer handling manpower, admin, training, supply and the budget for the Naval Security Force in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

In 2005, CDR Sankes-Ritland laterally transferred into Human Resource community. After graduate school, she executed duties at Commander Navy Region Southwest (CNRSW) as a Manpower Analyst in N110/N111 and N16 in charge of Workforce Development. Following her time at CNRSW, she reported to OPNAV N10 to complete her LCDR milestone tour as the Lead Strength Planner. She then reported to United States Fleet Forces (USFF) N1P working as part of the Manning and Readiness Team. Following an 11-month sabbatical through the Career Intermission Program (CIP), she was assigned as the Regional Director East at Navy Education Training Command (NETC) General Skills Training (GST) where she earned her designation as a Master Training Specialist. She then completed a second LCDR milestone tour as the Training Officer on the USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH followed by accepting the position of POM and Personnel Programs Director at Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). Sankes-Ritland assumed the duties as Commanding Officer of Norfolk Transient Personnel Unit in December 2020.

Her personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards).