

Navy's Former Top Civilian Executive Backs Rochford in Florida's 14th District

Navy's former top career civilian backs the analysis: 33 years, 16 commands, four Legions of Merit, 15,008 evacuated from Lebanon, zero adverse findings.

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, August 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A newly released operational analysis of the military career of Republican congressional candidate R.A. "Rocky" Rochford documents that the retired U.S. Navy Captain held tactical control of more than \$300 billion in American military assets — a figure exceeding twice the annual budget of the State of Florida — across a 33-year career spanning 16 commands, without a single adverse finding on record.

The assessment is backed by Mark Honecker, who retired as an SES-3 — the highest career civilian rank in the United States Navy, protocol-equivalent to a three-star admiral — and who served as Executive Director and Chief of Staff of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, the four-star organization responsible for manning, training, and equipping the fleet.

"Rocky has the ability to build relationships and drive the right solution across the Fleets, Pentagon leadership, and on Capitol Hill," Honecker said. "His sense of service, strong leadership, and tremendous energy ensured the Fleet's missions were supported and the taxpayer got the greatest return on their investment."

The analysis, titled The Operator's Record, was released four days before Florida's August 18 Republican primary in the 14th Congressional District. All figures are drawn from official U.S. Navy service records, award citations, and certified public election returns, and are independently verifiable.



Retired Navy Capt. and Commodore Rocky Rochford served over 33 years in uniform, including command of 13 ships

The document examines the mechanisms behind Rochford's results rather than cataloguing them. Its central finding is that Rochford repeatedly produced outcomes in organizations where he held no authority to compel them.

In 2014, Rochford took command of Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron THREE in Guam — 13 vessels the Pentagon had placed on its disestablishment list. Rather than appeal the decision, Rochford identified roughly 100 unused berths aboard each ship and connected that idle capacity to U.S. 7th Fleet's unmet demand for partner-nation training missions. Executing the plan required agreement from four separate commands, none of which reported to him; one required nearly six months of continuous negotiation. Squadron utilization increased ten-fold. MPSRON-3 has not appeared on a disestablishment list since 2015.

The analysis also documents

Rochford's 2006 service as Crisis Action Team Chief at U.S. Naval Forces Central Command in Bahrain, where he coordinated the evacuation of 15,008 American citizens from Lebanon during the Israel-Hezbollah conflict — the largest non-combatant evacuation operation conducted by the United States since Saigon.

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Mark Honecker SES-3 (Ret)

Rochford holds four Legions of Merit awarded by four separate chains of command, a Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Meritorious Service Medals, and four Joint Service Commendation Medals. He earned a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College as an Arleigh Burke Fellow and VADM Samuel L. Gravely Scholar, and completed the Congressional Operations Seminar at Georgetown



Retired Navy Capt. and Commodore Rocky Rochford, Republican candidate for Florida's 14th Congressional District. Served You Then. Ready To Serve You Again.



Rocky for Congress, Florida's 14th Congressional District, Committee to Elect Rocky Rochford

University's Government Affairs Institute in 2004. From 2011 to 2014 he served as U.S. Fleet Forces Command's liaison to the Pentagon, coordinating briefings to professional staff of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees.

"For thirty-three years, they sent me to the things that were broken," Rochford said. "Nobody ever handed me a command that was running well. They handed me the squadron on the chopping block, the organization that didn't exist yet, and the crisis with fifteen thousand Americans on the wrong side of a border. I fixed them, I wrote the instructions so they stayed fixed, and I moved on. Washington is broken in exactly those ways. I'm not asking anyone to take a chance on me. I'm asking them to look at the record."

Rochford enters the primary having drafted [41 pieces of legislation](#) and four position papers, including a ten-bill Children's Bill of Rights suite and a ten-bill Seniors' Bill of Rights suite, prepared for introduction without campaign staff or outside consultants.

Certified election returns show Rochford earned 145,643 votes in his 2024 congressional campaign. The next-highest total among candidates in the current primary field is 58,130. One candidate in the race has never appeared on a ballot.

Early voting in Hillsborough County is underway. Election Day is Tuesday, August 18.

The Operator's Record is available in full at Rocky4Congress.com.

About Rocky

R.A. "Rocky" Rochford is a retired United States Navy Captain and Commodore with 33 years of service and a candidate for Congress in Florida's 14th Congressional District. He served at U.S. Central Command and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, deployed forward during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, and commanded Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron THREE and Naval Beach Group ONE. Learn more at Rocky4Congress.com.

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