

CV Admiral Michel Hofman

Belgian Chief of Defense

A native of Oostende, Vice admiral Michel HOFMAN finished his high school at the Royal Cadet School in Brussels and then joined the Royal Military Academy in 1978 as a candidate naval officer where he studied social and military sciences (118th All weapons class).

As a junior officer, he held several positions on board minesweepers, mine hunters and frigates. This period ended with a deployment in the Gulf region during Operation Desert Shield / Desert Storm on the WANDELAAR frigate.

Between 1991 and 1997, his operational career went on, first ashore at the Operations School of the Belgian Navy in St-Kruis Brugge, later on board the CROCUS mine hunter, the WESTDIEP frigate and by taking part in STANAVFORLANT, the NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic. In autumn 97, he joined the Chief of Defence staff, Vice Admiral Herteleer, where he contributed to the development of a strategic vision for Defence through the "Vision 2015" working group. In 2000, after graduation from the Senior Staff Course at the "College Interarmées de Défense" in Paris, he took command of the WESTDIEP frigate and was later on deployed in the Mediterranean to participate in Operation Active Endeavour, launched shortly after the 9/11 attacks. In 2002, he was appointed Chief of Staff to the Belgian-Dutch Task Group and in January 2004, he became Deputy Operations Assistant to the Commander of the Marine Component and Deputy Chief Operations Officer ADMIRAL BENELUX.

In 2006, he became successively Deputy Officer and then Commander of the Operations Division within the Operations & Training Department of the Defence Staff. During that intense period, he contributed to numerous operational deployments of our Defence, notably in Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and off the coast of Somalia. In late 2010, he set sail once again as Deputy to the French Commander of the European Force EUNAVFOR Atalanta, at the height of acts of piracy off the Somali coast. Following this deployment, he became Commander of the Belgian Navy Component and Deputy Admiral BENELUX. The purchase program for the two new coastal patrol vessels Castor and Pollux was carried out during that period.

In May 2015 he joined again the Operations & Training Department of the Defence Staff, first as Deputy Operations Officer and later as Head of the Department. Michel HOFMAN was promoted to Vice Admiral on 26 June 2016

In July 2017, he was appointed as Vice Chief of Defense. He was charged with the restructuration of the Defense Staff and with the implementation of the Strategic vision.

In July 2020, he became Chief of Defense.

He lives in Oostende and shares his free time with his family and friends.