

## Admiral Eric T. Olson, USN Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command

Admiral Eric Thor Olson, USN, (born 1951 or 1952 in Tacoma, Washington<sup>[1]</sup>) is the eighth and current commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Olson is the first Navy SEAL ever to be appointed to the grade of a three-star and four-star admiral as well as the first naval officer to be USSOCOM's combatant commander. Olson is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School. Olson participated in the Battle of Mogadishu in 1993.<sup>[2]</sup>

Olson graduated from the Naval Academy in 1973 and completed SEAL training in 1974. For the next two decades, he served in a variety of military assignments, many of them overseas, until 1994 when he became commander of the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, an American counter-terrorism unit. Olson was promoted again in 1999 when he assumed command of Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, California.<sup>[1]</sup> He assumed his current assignment on 9 July 2007.

### Awards and Decorations

- Navy Distinguished Service Medal
- Silver Star
- Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
- Legion of Merit
- Bronze Star with valor device
- Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
- Meritorious Service Medal with 2 Gold Stars
- Joint Service Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster
- Navy Commendation Medal
- Combat Action Ribbon with Gold Star
- Joint Meritorious Unit Award with oak leaf cluster
- Navy Unit Commendation with 1 bronze Service star
- Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation
- National Defense Service Medal with 2 bronze Service stars
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with 1 bronze Service star
- Vietnam Service Medal with 1 bronze Service star
- Southwest Asia Service Medal with 2 bronze Service stars
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Armed Forces Service Medal
- Navy Sea Service Deployment Ribbon with 2 bronze Service stars
- Navy & Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon with 2 bronze Service stars
- Special Operations Service Ribbon
- United Nations Medal
- Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
- Kuwait Liberation Medal (Government of Kuwait)
- Navy Expert Rifleman Medal
- Navy Expert Pistol Shot Medal