

Commander Bryan Hopper

Executive Officer

Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 31



Cmdr. Bryan Hopper graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography. Upon completion of flight training, he was awarded his naval flight officer wings in 2002 and subsequently reported to Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 129 for fleet replacement training in the EA-6B Prowler.

In May 2003, Hopper reported to the “Zappers” of VAQ-130 aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). After an extended work-up cycle that included participation in Operation Noble Eagle, the Zappers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In 2006, Hopper was selected for the NFO to Pilot transition program. Upon completion of flight training at Naval Air Station Kingsville, Texas, Hopper earned his naval aviator wings and reported to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106 for fleet replacement training in the F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet. In June 2009, he reported to the “Checkmates” of VFA-211 in Oceana, Virginia. As a member of the Checkmates, he made the last two deployments of the USS Enterprise (CVN 65), supporting Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and New Dawn.

In September 2012, Hopper reported to the “Kestrels” of VFA-137 in Lemoore, California for his department head tour. As members of the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) team, the Kestrels executed a full work-up cycle that concluded with their participation in the biennial Rim of the Pacific Exercise. Following this underway period, the Kestrels began an additional work-up cycle in preparation for the Navy’s three carrier hull swap and Southern Seas deployment. While assigned to the Kestrels, Hopper served as the administrative officer, safety officer, maintenance officer, and operations officer.

Hopper reported to United States Africa Command in Stuttgart, Germany in 2015. During his first year at AFRICOM, Hopper worked in the Joint Operations Center as an operations officer, overseeing and reporting on day-to-day operations across the AFRICOM area of operations. Hopper subsequently moved to the J335 Crisis Operations Branch, where he ultimately served as a Crisis Operations Planning Team lead, directing multi-agency efforts in response to a wide variety of crises on the African continent. His tour at AFRICOM culminated with a tour as a member of the headquarters staff, where he served as the secretary to the Joint Staff, directing cross-organizational tasking to ensure AFRICOM effectively and efficiently fulfilled internal and external mission requirements.

Hopper returned to NAS Kingsville in 2018, where he served as the air operations officer, interim executive officer, and base Emergency Operations Center director. In addition to his normally assigned duties, he flew as a guest instructor supporting Training Air Wing 2. In September of 2021, Hopper reported to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 31 as the Executive Officer.

His personal awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal (3 Strike/Flight awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (2 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and various campaign and unit level awards. He has accumulated more than 3,000 total flight hours in various airframes and crew stations.