

Major General (OF-7) Benoît Vidaud

Director of the Command and Doctrine Education Center (*Centre de doctrine et d'enseignement du commandement - CDEC*)



Born on 8 September 1967, Major General Benoît Vidaud joined the French Saint-Cyr Coëtquidan Military Academy in 1987 ("Lieutenant Tom Morel" Class).

He chose to serve in the French Army Air Corps (AAC) (*Aviation Légère de l'Armée de Terre – ALAT*) with the engineering specialty. He first joined the Angers-based branch school before beginning his helicopter pilot training within the AAC.

From 1992 to 1996, he served within the 4th Attack and Manoeuvre Helicopter Battalion in Nancy. As of 1993, he was assigned to the Pau-based 4th Manoeuvre Company dedicated to Special Forces. He completed his training as a combat pilot, aircraft commander, and patrol commander there. He also passed his pilot qualification on PUMA and COUGAR helicopters. In 1993, he took part in Operation Épervier based in Chad. In 1994, he was assigned to Former Yugoslavia and then to the Central African Republic (CAR). On 1st August 1996, he took command of the Special

Operations Squadron in Pau and took part in CAR-based Operation Almandin II the following year.

From 1st July 1998, he was involved in the overhaul of the Coëtquidan Schools and organised the board of examiners for the Saint-Cyr diploma as an editor in the schools' research department. Upon graduation from the Military Scientific and Technical Training School (*Enseignement militaire scientifique et technique – EMST*) in 2000, he attended the French Test Pilot School (*École du personnel navigant d'essais et de réception – EPNER*). He later joined the Joint Services Command and Staff College (*Collège interarmées de défense – CID*) in 2001.

In 2002, he was designated as head of the Management and General Studies Bureau for a year in Paris, and later joined the airmobile group of the Army's technical department on 1st July 2003 as a programme officer for the NH90 helicopter (CAÏMAN).

In 2006, he served as an Aeromobility Summary Officer within the Programme and Weapons Systems Bureau, and updated the aeromobility function's equipment policy while preparing for the arrival of the new-generation TIGRE and CAÏMAN helicopters.

He took command of the AAC School based in Dax on 5th September 2009, and set up the first public-private partnership contract with HELIDAX Company.

On 16th July 2011, he was appointed as head of the bureau responsible for the operational readiness of attack helicopter battalions in Lille. In March 2012, he took command of the helicopter detachment on Dixmude amphibious helicopter-carrier from Djibouti as part of counter-piracy Operation Atalante.

In July 2012, he joined the Capability Coherence Division of the Defence Staff as a Helicopter Programme Coherence Officer. Later in September 2013, he was selected to follow the session on Armaments and Defence Economics at the Higher National Defence Studies (*Institut des Hautes Études de la Défense Nationale – IHEDN*). In summer 2015, he took up the position of "combat engagement" Operational Coherence Officer, still within the Capability Coherence Division.

From August 2017, he served as the Chief of Staff of the AAC Command in Villacoublay.

Promoted to the rank of Brigadier General on 1st June 2020, he took up the position of Director of the French Army Armaments Design and Development Agency (*Section technique de l'armée de Terre – STAT*) on 1st August 2020.

Promoted to the rank of Major General on 6th July 2023, he took up the position of Director of the Command and Doctrine Education Center (*Centre de doctrine et d'enseignement du commandement – CDEC*) on 1st August 2023.

Major General Vidaud is married and father of four children.

He is an Officer of the Legion of Honour and has been awarded the Aeronautical Medal.



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