



**Royal P. Gordon III, CDR USN (Ret.)**  
 “Flash”

Hometown: Richmond, Virginia

High School and College Career:

Huguenot High School  
 BA University of Virginia  
 MA Central Michigan University

Dates on Active Duty: May 1975 – May 1995

Date Commissioned/Source:

17 May 1975/NROTC University of Virginia

Date of Designation: 29 October 1976

Total Flight Hours: 13,055

Carrier/Ship Landings: 832

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 4530 Prop: 25 VF/VA: 4275 VT: 255 Civilian/  
 FEDEX: 8500

Combat tours:

El Dorado Canyon, Libya, April 1986, VF-102, F-14A  
 Operation Provide Comfort, Iraq, Spring 1991, VF-31, F-14A

Commands:

CO, VF-31

Awards:

2 Meritorious Service Medals  
 4 Navy Commendation Medals (2 with Combat V)  
 1 Navy Achievement Medal



### **Duty Assignment Chronology**

08/71-08/75	NROTC University of Virginia
08/75-10/76	Flight Training VT-1/VT-4
10/76-09/77	F-4 FRS Training VF-171
09/77-02/80	VF-31, LSO, F-4J
02/80-02/83	VF-171 Det Key West, FRS ACM Instructor, LSO, F-4N/J/S, A-4E, TA-4J
02/83-01/84	F-14 FRS Training
01/84-02/87	VF-102 Maintenance Officer, F-14A
02/87-01/90	VF-101 FRS Instructor, Operations Officer, XO, F-14A/B
01/90-06/92	VF-31 XO/CO F-14A/D
06/92-06/94	COMCARGRU 4 Air Operations Officer/ VF-101 FRS Instructor
06/94-05/95	Naval Doctrine Command, Assistant Director of Doctrine Development

### **Summary of Significant Career Events**

1. VT-1 Primary Training: Graduated number 1 in class. Selected to Commodore’s List for superior performance.
2. VT-4 Basic and Advanced Jet Training: Graduated number 1 in class. Selected to Commodore’s List for superior performance.
3. Selected for and attended LSO School immediately following graduation from the Training Command.
4. VF-171 F-4FRS: Graduated number 1 in class. Received VF-171 Det Key West “Top Crew Award” for excellence in air combat training. “Top Hook” in carrier qualification.
5. Priority Alpha FRS graduate. Reported directly to VF-31 deployed to the Mediterranean.
6. TOPGUN class 04/79. Selected “CAG” for class graduation “Alpha Strike”.

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7. Selected over more senior aviators as East Coast F-4J Flight Demonstration Pilot in 1979.

8. While serving as an air combat maneuvering (ACM) instructor in VF-171 Det Key West, was awarded Navy Achievement Medal for meritorious achievement in the handling of an F-4N aircraft out of control flight situation due to a severe flight control malfunction.

9. Awarded Navy Commendation Medal (with combat V) for successfully detecting and avoiding two SA-5 missiles in the Gulf of Sidra off the coast of Libya on 24 March 1986. This was the first known SA-5 launch against US Forces.

10. Awarded Navy Commendation Medal (with combat V) for providing Combat Air Patrol for the joint services strike on Tripoli, Libya 15 April 1986.

11. Awarded Navy Commendation Medal for meritorious service as VF-102 Maintenance Officer from December 1985 to January 1987.

12. Selected for and served as F-14 Flight Demonstration Pilot from April 1987 to April 1992. Demonstrated the F-14A/B throughout CONUS as well as the Mediterranean theater of operations. As the East Coast F-14 Flight Demonstration Coordinator, completely revamped the program and worked with Grumman to design a performance and syllabus expressly for the F-14B and the GE-110 engine.

13. Awarded Navy Commendation Medal for meritorious service in VF-101 from September 1987 to January 1990 as F-14 Flight Demonstration Coordinator, Operations Officer and Executive Officer.

14. Early select for Operational Command. Rotated early to deployed VF-31 to provide pilot leadership after CO relieved for cause. Most junior XO/CO in the AIRWING. As CO, led the squadron through the last operational deployment of the USS *Forrestal* (CV-59) which included operations in Northern Iraq in support of Operation Provide Comfort. Subsequently, oversaw the relocation of VF-31 to NAS Miramar and the squadron transition to the F-14D.

15. Recognized as AIRLANT Pro of the Week in July 1991 for F-14A OK (No Comment) night single engine, no artificial horizon shipboard arrested landing.

16. Awarded Meritorious Service Medal for performance as CO VF-31.

17. COMCARGRU Four Air Operations Officer May 1992 to June 1994. Deployed on six COMPTUEX Battle Group training exercises. Flew extensively with each AIRWING while training and evaluating strike tactics, shipboard proficiency, and fighter weapons employment. Served as East Coast Missile Exercise Observer/Evaluator. Additionally, flew with VF-101 as a fully qualified FRS instructor to maintain currency.

18. In the cockpit for nineteen of twenty years of service. (4530 flight hours/six major deployments/832 traps.)

19. Eleven AIRWING TOP TEN Awards. Two AIRWING Number One Awards.

20. Awarded Meritorious Service Medal for service as the Aviation Doctrine Development Officer, Naval Doctrine Development Division, Naval Doctrine Command, Norfolk, VA from July 1994 to May 1995.

### **Summary of Post Military Work**

(1) Employed 22 years as a pilot for the Federal Express Corporation (FEDEX). Served eight years as First Officer on the 727, MD-10/11. Served 14 years as Captain on the MD-10/11. Extensive experience (over 8000 flight hours) in domestic and international flight operations.

### **Personal**

(1) Resides in Virginia Beach, VA. Married to the former Gail Adamson since September 9, 1978. Three grown children:

(a) Royal P. Gordon IV, CAPT USNR (USNA 2002} Naval Aviator/FEDEX Pilot (former XO/CO VFC-12)

(b) Katherine "Kater" Gordon Cuervo (UVA 2004) London Play Producer; Emmy Award-winning television writer (2009)

(c) Robert A. Gordon, CDR USN (UVA NROTC 2008) Naval Aviator (PXO/CO VFA-31)

(2) Eight grandchildren

### **Associations/Membership/Boards:**

(1) Senior Docent, Military Aviation Museum Virginia Beach

(2) Safety/Security Team, Virginia Beach United Methodist Church

(3) Life Member Tailhook Association

(4) Life Member Association of Naval Aviation

(5) Member Naval Aviation Museum Foundation

(6) Member TOPGUN Association

(7) Aviation Merit Badge Counselor, Boy Scouts of America