

Air Force Chief of Staff, General Denis Mercier

General Denis Mercier was appointed Air Force Chief of Staff on September 17th 2012.

He joined the French Air Force academy in 1979 and qualified as a fighter pilot in 1983. Throughout his career he acquired extensive experience both as an operational commander and as a fighter pilot; having flown 182 combat missions and more than 3000 flying hours (mostly on Mirage F1C and Mirage 2000C).

He started his career as a fighter pilot in Orange air force base, and then moved to Dijon. He later commanded Cambrai “Cambrésis” squadron. After War College, he joined the Joint Operational Planning headquarters in Creil Air Force base. In 1999 he left France for Brunsum, in the Netherlands, where he was posted as deputy head of the combined joint task force. Back in France he commanded Reims air force base named after the well-known fighter pilot “Commandant Marin-la-Meslée”.

From 2004 to 2008 he was assigned to the headquarters in Paris, first in the plan division and later as deputy head of the budget and performance division.

In 2008 he was appointed commander of the French Air Force Academy in Salon de Provence. Before accessing to his actual position he used to work as a senior military advisor for the ministry of Defense.

He was awarded the rank of Grand Officer of the French Legion of Honour. He is also, among other distinctions, an officer of the National Order of Merit.

He has been married to Agnès for twenty-six years, and both had three children. He enjoys drawing and painting, and he practises skiing.

