

VADM Michael "Mike" Franken, USN, Ret.

Teams: Defense & Aerospace; Energy, Installations & Environment; Government Relations; International; Naval & Missile Defense; Security

Expertise Areas

- Defense, Energy, Development, and Maritime Domains
- Full Contract Lifecycle (Strategy, Capture, and Execution)
- Strategic Communications and Marketing
- Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Assistance, and Training
- Congressional, Legislative, and Foreign Affairs
- Full-Spectrum Military Operations
- Business Development and Strategic Consulting

Professional Experience

Admiral Franken supports clients in defense and government relations domains, leveraging his more than four decades of work in defense, energy, development, maritime, legislative, and foreign affairs. He delivers expertise in energy grid sustainability, infrastructure development, and climate mitigation domains, including in market expansion, large-scale military project, and technical application arenas. A recent U.S. Senate candidate who served in several Congressional liaison roles during his military career, he is well-connected with key decision-makers and leaders on both sides of the aisle.

Prior to joining The SPECTRUM Group (TSG), Admiral Franken served a 36-year U.S. Navy career, culminating in his serving as Deputy Commander, U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), where he supported continent-wide U.S. operations, U.S. military personnel, and associated liaisons. Previously, he served as Chief of Legislative Affairs, Department of the Navy, representing the Navy on Capitol Hill. Earlier, Admiral Franken served as Chief of Staff, Joint Staff J5 (Plans, Policy, and Strategy), working with other Joint Staff leadership and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement joint policies and strategies. He also previously served as Commander, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, USAFRICOM, where he served as the on-the-ground leader of U.S. operations in Djibouti and 14 East African nations, and as Vice Commander for Plans, Policy, and Strategy for U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM).

In addition to his work at TSG, Admiral Franken serves as a Senior Fellow, Center for Naval Analysis; a Distinguished Fellow, The Stimson Center; and as a Co-Lead of the Defense Science Board (DSB), where he co-wrote the DSB's 2023 climate change study.

Key Positions

- Department of the Navy and Marine Corps Chief of Legislative Affairs
- Deputy Commander, USAFRICOM
- Extensive combat theater experience, including commanding a destroyer squadron, a combined joint task force, and an international task group

Education

- Graduate, Seminar XXI, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- M.S., Underwater Warfare, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School
- B.S., Civil Engineering and Finance, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

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