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Colonel (Ret) Tom Plunkett has been the Chief Deputy for the Fifth Circuit since September 27, 2010. He earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Louisiana State University and later was awarded a Master of Science in Health Care Administration and a Master of Arts in Strategic Studies. Prior to joining the judiciary, Tom served for thirty years in the United States Army, including combat tours in Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. His military awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab and Combat Infantryman Badge. He is also the recipient of the Legionnaire and Centurion Award of the Order of St. Maurice (National Infantry Association) and the Order of St. George (National Armor and Cavalry Association).