

Biography

Colonel Aart Jan de Haan, LL.M.

Head of the Army Legal Service of the Royal Netherlands Army

Colonel Aart Jan de Haan is a native from Meppel, the Netherlands. He joined the Royal Military Academy in 1984 as an officer-cadet for the Field Artillery and graduated in 1988 as second lieutenant.



He had several assignments within 42 Artillery Battalion (M109 Howitzer) in Assen, the Netherlands. Starting as a Battery Control Officer, he was promoted to First Lieutenant in 1989. In 1991 he was promoted to Captain and assumed command of the battalion's maintenance platoon. In 1995 he assumed command of the B-Battery of 154 Artillery Battalion (M114 Howitzer) in 't Harde, the Netherlands. In 1996 he joined the advanced officer's education and was recommended to join the Officers Staff School. From 1996 to 1998 he was assigned as a planning officer to the Army's Service for Labour Conditions and Safety and in this assignment he was promoted to Major.

Instead of joining the Officers Staff School he applied for and was selected for Law School to become a judge advocate. He graduated from the Law faculty of the University of Groningen in 2000.

His first posting as a legal advisor was at the First German-Netherlands Corps in Münster, Germany. In 2002 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and posted in Seedorf, Germany as legal advisor of the Netherlands Armed Forces Support Agency Germany (NASAG). In 2003 he became acting Chief of Staff of NASAG. In 2005 he moved with NASAG to Rheindahlen, Germany. In November 2005 he was posted as a legal Advisor at the Operations Directorate of the Ministry of Defense in The Hague, the Netherlands.

In 2007 he was assigned as Commander of the Netherlands Armed Forces Support Agency in Rheindahlen, Germany. In 2010 he became the first Commander of the International Support Services Centre in Utrecht, the Netherlands. This centre, created during his command, supports all the Netherlands military and their families posted abroad on non combat assignments, and the Dutch and foreign Military personnel assigned to International postings within the Netherlands.

In October 2012 Lieutenant Colonel de Haan was promoted to Colonel and assigned as Chief of staff of the NATO Rule of Law Field Support Mission – Afghanistan for a six months period. In May 2013 he assumed a position at the Principal Directorate of Personnel at the Dutch MoD. Since December 2015 he has been assigned as Head of the Army Legal Service of the Royal Netherlands Army. Issues he has been dealing with in this position are, amongst others, the concerns about the quality and availability of the military police service, the integrity of the Army and the professionalization of the Mobile Military Criminal Court.

Colonel de Haan has been deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina from October 2001 until April 2002 as Legal Advisor of the Netherlands Contingent Commander in Banja Luka. In August 2006 he was deployed to Kabul on five days notice to take over the tour of his fallen comrade, Lieutenant Colonel Jan van Twist, who died in a helicopter accident in eastern Afghanistan.

Colonel de Haan has been rewarded numerous times throughout his career for the way he performed his duties. He has been awarded the following personal decorations:

- The NATO medal for service in Bosnia-Herzegovina (2001)
- The NATO medal for service in Afghanistan (2006 and 2013)
- The Netherlands Remembrance Medal for Peacekeeping Operations (three times)
- The Army Medal for 25 years of service as an officer
- The Army Medal for operational duties
- The Medal for the Nijmegen Four Days Marches
- The Medal for the Reserve Officers Two Days Performance Tour
- The (USA) Bronze Star Medal

Colonel de Haan and his wife Anja have been married over 30 years. Together they have three children. They lived in several places in the Netherlands and Germany.