

Lt. Col. Payne assumed duty as Commander of the 1-345th Engineer Battalion on June 23, 2011. His most recent assignment was deputy commander of the US Army Corps of Engineers Mobile, Ala. District from 2007-2011. During this assignment he deployed to Gulf Region District at Camp Victory, Iraq for six months in 2010.

Payne is a native of Stafford, Va. and began his military career as a cadet at Virginia Military Institute in 1986. He graduated from VMI in 1990 and was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers and assigned as a platoon leader with the 44th Engineer Battalion (Mech), 2nd Infantry Division, in Korea from 1991-1992. Following this assignment Payne was platoon leader and company executive officer at Fort Rucker, Ala. with the 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) from 1992-1995. After completing the Engineer Officer Advanced Course in 1995 he served as company commander and staff officer with the 11th Engineer Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division (Mech) at Fort Stewart, Ga. until 1999. He also served as a company commander and staff officer with the 1-395th Engineer Training Support Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas; evaluation officer at Army Test and Evaluation Command in Arlington, Va. and area engineer with 1st Infantry Division (Mech) in Tikrit, Iraq 2004-2005.

Payne also served as battalion operations officer and executive officer for the 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) at Fort Polk, La. and deployed to Ramadi, Iraq for 12 months with 1st Armored Division. Payne's other OCONUS deployments included Operation Desert Thunder in Kuwait, Operation Bright Star in Egypt and construction missions to Colombia, Panama and the US-Mexico border region.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star (2), Purple Heart, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4) , Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, the Air Assault Badge, Parachutist Badge and the Combat Action Badge. He has attended Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, MCGOC, BMOC, CAS3, ILE, Acquisition Basic Course and the Test and Evaluation Basic Course.

Payne is a licensed project management professional and DoD Level II certified Facilities Engineer . He earned a graduate certificate in environmental management in 2010 and an MS in environmental engineering from the University of Florida in 2011. Payne has published numerous articles and professional journals. He is also a life member of SAME, AEA and the Order of the Purple Heart .