

## **Captain Nicholas A Trongale, RAN**

Captain Trongale is the inaugural Director of Robotics, Autonomous Systems and Artificial Intelligence in Warfare Innovation Navy, Navy Headquarters, Canberra. He entered the Royal Australian Navy in 2017 under the Mid-Career Entry Scheme. Captain Trongale was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. After graduating from University, he went to Pensacola, Florida where he was trained by USMC drill instructors. He was commissioned an ensign in the US Navy in 1979, rising to the rank of captain in 17 years. He is in his fifth decade serving in a navy.



Captain Trongale is a 1983 Navy Fighter Weapons School “TOPGUN” graduate and 1988 E-2 “Hawkeye of the Year”. As a former Naval Flight Officer, he accumulated over 3,000 flight hours in the E-2 Hawkeye; over 500 carrier landings; and flight time in the F-14, A-4, EA-3B, S-3, SH-3, T-2, E-3; the F-5F flying adversary missions for TOPGUN; and combat time in the EA-6B. He embarked in USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65), USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63) three times, USS NIMITZ (CVN 68), USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) twice, USS BOXER (LHD 4), and USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6). As commanding officer, his squadron was assigned to the carrier air wing responsible for integrating women in combat aviation roles in the USN. After squadron command at sea and following his selection for deep draft ship command, Captain Trongale attended the USN’s Surface Warfare Officer School (SWOS) and the SWOS Commanding Officer Course in Newport, Rhode Island.

Subsequent to his career in the USN, Captain Trongale served as the President of the College of Oceaneering at the Port of Los Angeles where he was responsible for training commercial divers. Moving from academia to industry, he went on to become a program manager at General Atomics Aeronautical Systems for the Predator and Altair UAV programs; and from there was handpicked as NASA’s Integrated Flight Team Lead for its ACCESS 5 UAV program at the Dryden Flight Research Center.

Captain Trongale’s advanced education includes a Doctorate in Leadership Studies from the University of San Diego, and master’s degrees from Stanford University and the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Political Science and National Security Affairs. He was a Federal Executive Research Fellow at the RAND Corporation; an Admiral Arthur S. Moreau Scholar; he attended Executive Training at Harvard University and the Defense and Industry Studies Course (DISC). While at RAND, he participated in studies on China, C4I and Unmanned Systems. He is a trained negotiator. His awards include the U.S. Legion of Merit and 13 unit commendations.

Captain Trongale became an ordained minister in 2005. His hobbies include the martial arts, boxing, recreational hard hat diving, riding motorcycles and playing bass guitar. He and his wife Elizabeth are active volunteers with the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in Canberra.