



The Pentagon overhauls European leadership: General Charles Costanza also removed

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The shakeup at the top of U.S. armed forces continues. After the departure of General Christopher Donahue, another upheaval has struck the chain of command of the U.S. Army in Europe: Lieutenant General **Charles Costanza**, commander of the **V Corps**, has been suddenly removed from his position.

The confirmation came directly from the Army, which however did not specify the exact date of removal or specific reasons, merely stating that «the matter has been referred to the competent authority in accordance with Army regulations».

The transition to command and Costanza's profile

Pending the official transition, command is temporarily assumed by Brigadier General **John B. Mountford**, vice commander for operational readiness of the V Corps. Subsequently, Major General **Thomas M. Feltey** — designated for promotion to lieutenant general — will permanently assume leadership of the Corps, based at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Entering service in 1991 after completing his education at West Point as an armor cavalry officer, Costanza boasted solid field experience. Before taking command of the V Corps in April 2024, he had served as vice commander of U.S. Army forces in Europe and Africa and had led the 3rd Infantry Division.

The key role of V Corps on the eastern flank

The V Corps represents a fundamental pillar for NATO's strategic posture, overseeing ground forces deployed on the **eastern flank of the Alliance**.

Through close cooperation with allied partners, the command manages the integration of defenses, the development and deployment of **counter-drone systems** and long-range delivery systems in the region. Since its reactivation in October 2020, Costanza had been only the second commander to lead the Corps.

A wave of purges at the top

Although an Army spokesperson told *Military Times* that the removal has no political motivations and is unrelated to the actions of Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, the changeover is part of a context of **profound reshuffling at the top of the Pentagon**.

Since the beginning of his tenure, Hegseth has removed or replaced at least a dozen senior officers and executives. A line of discontinuity that, in early July, had already led to the unexpected departure of General **Christopher Donahue**, former commander of USAREUR-AF, marking a phase of drastic restructuring for the U.S. military chain of command overseas.