# POSITION DESCRIPTION

**navy ASSISTANT secretary for research, Development and Acquisition, department of defense**

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| **Overview** |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas. |
| Position Overview | The assistant secretary of the navy for research, development and acquisition serves as the Navy acquisition executive, with authority, responsibility and accountability for all acquisition functions and programs, and for enforcement of undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics procedures. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary of the Navy |
| Senate Committee | Armed Services |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | As the Navy’s acquisition executive, the assistant secretary is responsible for the research, development and acquisition of Navy and Marine Corps platforms and warfare systems, a responsibility that includes oversight of more than 100,000 people and an annual budget exceeding $50 billion. The organization consists of an immediate staff; program executive officers; direct reporting program managers; and the Naval Systems Commands and their field activities. The program executive officers and direct reporting program managers are responsible for the development and acquisition of naval systems. The Naval Systems Commands and their field activities are also responsible for systems acquisition and supporting those systems in the operating fleet. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Serves as the Navy acquisition executive representing the Navy to the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics and to Congress on all matters relating to acquisition policy and programs
* Establishes policies and procedures, and manages the Navy’s research, development and acquisition activities in accordance with Department of Defense 5000 Series Directives (which are related to the acquisition system)
* Responsible for the development and acquisition of Navy and Marine Corps platforms and weapon systems
* Serves as the Program (Milestone) Decision Authority on Acquisition Category (ACAT) 1C programs and recommends decisions on ACAT 1D programs; (**ACAT I** programs are major defense acquisition programs; “C” refers to “component”; “D” refers to the “Defense Acquisition Board”)
* Oversees the operation of the Navy’s principal subordinate System Commands, which include the following:
* Naval Air Systems Command
* Naval Sea Systems Command
* Space and Naval Warfare Command
* Navy Supply Systems Command
* Navy Facilities Engineering Command
* Marine Corps Systems Command
* Office of Naval Research
* Manages and supervises programs and policy through the deputy assistant secretaries of the Navy for:
* Ships
* Research Development Test and Evaluation
* Air
* Management and Budget
* Expeditionary Programs and Logistics Management
* International Programs
* Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence and Space
* Acquisition and Procurement
* Unmanned Systems
* Exercises management and oversight of the following program executive officers responsible for all aspects of life-cycle management in the assigned programs:
* Joint Strike Fighter
* Integrated Warfare Systems
* Enterprise Information Systems
* Strategic Systems Program
* Submarines
* Aircraft Carriers
* Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence
* Ships
* Space Systems
* Air Anti-Submarine Warfare Assault and Special Missions
* Littoral Combat Ships
* Tactical Air
* Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons
* Land Systems
* Responsible, through the director, acquisition career management, for all matters relating to initiatives and other efforts that improve the acquisition workforce in the Navy through education, training and career management
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Appointed from civilian life
* Extensive leadership and management experience
* Strong substantive expertise in military affairs and civil/military relations
* Experience in the Department of Defense, the Armed Services Committee and/or other relevant entities
* Substantive scientific and/or engineering background
* Background or experience in federal budgeting, acquisition and workforce management
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| Competencies | * Strong communication and interpersonal skills
* Ability to handle sensitive matters
* Ability to integrate diverse missions and organizations
* Ability to work under high pressure
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |

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| Sean Stackley (2008 to 2017) – Professional staff member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, responsible for overseeing Navy and Marine Corps programs, U.S. Transportation Command matters, and related policy for the Seapower Subcommittee; Navy Surface Warfare Officer; Program Manager, LPD 17; Production Officer, the USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51); Project Naval Architect, Canadian Patrol Frigate HMCS Halifax (FFH 330) |
| John S. Thackrah (2007 to 2008) – Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget; Chief of Staff to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy; Senior Executive, United Technologies Corporation; Vice President of Commercial Products, Pratt and Whitney; Vice President, Otis Elevator |
| Delores Etter (2004 to 2007) – Faculty, United States Naval Academy faculty; Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Science and Technology; Principal U.S. representative to the NATO Research and Technology Board; Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Colorado; Faculty member in Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of New Mexico; Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of New Mexico; National Science Foundation Visiting Professor in the Electrical Engineering Department, Stanford University. |

# Endnotes

This position description was created with the help of MITRE Corporation, a not-for-profit company that provides innovative, practical solutions for some of the nation's most critical challenges in defense and intelligence, aviation, civil systems, homeland security, the judiciary, healthcare and cybersecurity.

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)