# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# principal deputy undersecretary for policy, Department of defense

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Armed Services |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Department of Defense (DOD) is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country. |
| Position Overview | The principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy advises the undersecretary of defense for policy and the secretary of defense on all matters pertaining to the development and execution of U.S. national defense policy and strategy. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Undersecretary of Defense for Policy |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy had a fiscal 2016 actual budget of $51.748 million. The fiscal 2018 estimate is for $174.5 million.[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Assists the undersecretary of defense for policy in the performance of his or her duties and acts for, and exercises the powers of, the undersecretary when he or she is unable to perform the functions and duties of the office (10 U.S.C. § 137a)
* Advises the undersecretary of defense for policy and the secretary of defense on all matters pertaining to the development and execution of U.S. national defense policy and strategy
* Provides advice and assistance to the secretary of defense, including, but not limited to: strategy formulation and policy planning; campaign and contingency planning and assessment; policy guidance for support to public diplomacy and countering ideological support for terrorism; oversight of sensitive activities and special access programs; regional policy formulation and planning; policy guidance for global force posture and deployment; integration of DOD policy, plans and capabilities with overall national security objectives; and policy guidance, assumptions and risk parameters for the planning, programming, budgeting and execution process[[3]](#endnote-3)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Appointed from civilian life (10 U.S.C. § 137a)
* Extensive leadership and managerial experience
* Strong substantive expertise in military policy and DOD’s functions and policies
* Experience dealing with high-profile stakeholders
* Experience leading through unexpected crisis situations
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| Competencies | * Exceptional communications and negotiation skills
* Ability to integrate diverse missions and organizations
* Ability to work under high pressure
* High level of energy for extensive foreign and domestic travel and interactions (if assigned by undersecretary)
* Ability to handle sensitive matters
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Brian P. McKeon (2014 to 2016) - Deputy Assistant to the President, Executive Secretary and Chief of Staff, Office of the Chief of Staff, National Security Council Staff, Executive Office of the President; Deputy Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs, Office of the Vice President, Executive Office of the President; Team Member, Department of State Review Team, President-Elect Obama Transition Team, Executive Office of the President[[4]](#endnote-4) |
| Kathleen H. Hicks (2012 to 2013) - Deputy Undersecretary, Strategy, Plans, and Forces, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense; Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies; Career Civil Servant in the Office of the Secretary of Defense[[5]](#endnote-5) |
| James N. Miller, Jr. (2009 to 2012) - Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense; Designated Federal Official, Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, Office of the Undersecretary for Policy, Department of Defense; Senior Associate, Center for Strategic and International Studies[[6]](#endnote-6) |

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)
2. <http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2018/budget_justification/pdfs/01_Operation_and_Maintenance/O_M_VOL_1_PART_1/OSD_OP-5.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Leadership Directories

<https://www.csis.org/people/kathleen-h-hicks> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-6)