# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# chairman, nuclear regulatory commission

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| **OVERVIEW** | |
| Senate Committee | Environment and Public Works[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Agency Mission | The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licenses and regulates the nation's civilian use of radioactive materials to protect public health and safety, promote common defense and security, and protect the environment.[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Position Overview | The chairman serves as the chief executive officer of the agency. He or she is the official spokesperson for the NRC and is directly responsible for agency administration and personnel issues. The chairman also develops the budget for consideration by the commission’s other members. |
| Compensation | Level II $179,700 (5 U.S.C. § 5313)[[3]](#endnote-3)  The NRC chairman, unlike heads of other independent commissions, is equivalent in rank to a deputy secretary in the executive branch. |
| Position Reports to | The NRC is an independent agency, and commissioners serve at the pleasure of the president. |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** | |
| Management Scope | NRC's proposed fiscal 2017 budget is $982.3 million, including 3,525 full-time equivalents (including those in the Office of the Inspector General). The NRC is headed by five commissioners appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate for five-year terms. The president also designates one of the commissioners to be the chairman and official spokesperson of the commission.[[4]](#endnote-4) That person oversees a staff of up to 18 in the Office of the Chairman. The chairman also oversees directly the NRC’s Office of Public Affairs and the Office of Congressional Affairs.[[5]](#endnote-5) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Serves as the spokesperson for the NRC * Leads interactions with congressional oversight committee * Represents the agency internationally, carrying out activities that include signing bilateral commitments and ensuring continuing relations with international partners and in international agreements * Manages all functions pertaining to an emergency involving NRC-licensed or regulated materials and facilities[[6]](#endnote-6) * Ensures the safety and security of existing nuclear reactors and radioactive materials * Implements a predictable safety review process for license applications * Ensures the agency conducts thorough environmental reviews * Promotes strong enforcement and accountability[[7]](#endnote-7) * Manages the agency’s personnel and administrative issues |
| Strategic Goals and Priorities | The agency’s priority and goal is to ensure public safety and health, protect the environment and provide for the common defense in civilian nuclear matters. The agency is responsible for overseeing civilian nuclear facilities, nuclear materials and nuclear waste disposal and transportation. |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** | |
| Requirements | * Subject matter expertise in nuclear energy, given that much of the decision-making is on issues of a highly technical nature * Legal expertise (a plus) * Willingness to travel frequently, domestically and internationally |
| Competencies | * Ability to work across partisan lines, given that the agency is nonpartisan * Ability to communicate with all stakeholders—industry, public interest groups, local and state governments (a plus) * Strong communication and interpersonal skills, given the need to communicate at the international level to media, NRC employees and members of Congress * Management expertise (preferred) |
| **PAST APPOINTEES** | |
| Stephen G. Burns (2015 to present) – Head of Legal Affairs of the Nuclear Energy Agency, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; General Counsel, Nuclear Regulatory Commission; Executive Assistant to Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission[[8]](#endnote-8) | |
| Allison M. Macfarlane (2012 to 2014) – Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Policy, George Mason University; member, Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future; Research Associate, Massachusetts Institute of Technology[[9]](#endnote-9) | |
| Gregory Jaczko (2009 to 2013) – Commissioner, Nuclear Regulatory Commission[[10]](#endnote-10); Appropriations Director and Science Policy Advisor, Senate; Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University[[11]](#endnote-11) | |

1. Plum book [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. 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-3)
4. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization/commfuncdesc.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. 2016 plum book [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML0529/ML052980187.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization/commission/former-commissioners/jaczko.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization/commission/burns.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization/commission/former-commissioners/macfarlane.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gregory-jaczko-4844145b> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization/commission/former-commissioners/jaczko.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)