POSITION DESCRIPTION

**ASSISTANT secretary for RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING, 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 assistant secretary of defense for research and engineering (ASD(R&E)) is the principal staff advisor to the undersecretary of defense (acquisition, technology and logistics) and to the deputy secretary and secretary of defense on all matters relating to science, technology, research and engineering. In this capacity, the ASD(R&E) serves as the chief technology officer for the DOD, charged with the development and oversight of the DOD technology strategy in concert with the department’s current and future requirements. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5313)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Undersecretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** | |
| Management Scope | The ASD(R&E) is responsible for the department’s strategies and supporting plans to develop and leverage the technologies needed to ensure continued U.S. technology superiority. The office provides leadership to, and establishes policy and guidance for, the development and execution of the department’s research and engineering program. The ASD(R&E) oversees matters from basic science and capability prototyping to research and engineering at the department’s laboratories; promotes coordination and cooperation across the DOD and between the DOD and other federal and non-federal agencies and organizations; and ensures technical exchange with allied and friendly nations.  The ASD(R&E) oversees the execution of a budget of approximately $13 billion dollars for fiscal 2017. The following officials report to the ASD(R&E):   * Principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for research and engineering * Deputy assistant secretary of defense for systems engineering * Deputy assistant secretary of defense for research * Deputy assistant secretary of defense for emerging capability and prototyping * Deputy assistant secretary for developmental test and evaluation * Director, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency * Director, Defense Technical Information Center * Director, Joint Reserve * Director, Net Technical Assessment |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Extends the capabilities of current warfighting systems, develops breakthrough capabilities, hedges against an uncertain future through a set of scientific and engineering options, and counters strategic surprise * In cooperation with the deputy undersecretary of defense for acquisition and technology, provides advice and assistance in developing policies for rapid technology transition * Serves as the principal staff assistant and advisor to the secretary of defense for all matters relating to research and development, systems engineering, advanced technology and developmental test and evaluation * As the chief technology officer for the DOD, establishes policies for research and development for all elements of the DOD, including policies and programs that improve, streamline and strengthen DOD component technology access and development programs |
| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** | |
| Requirements | * Appointed from civilian life * Extensive scientific and technical education * High-level experience in research and engineering * Comprehensive understanding of complex military systems * Strong understanding of military affairs and strategy * Background or experience in federal budgeting, acquisition and workforce management |
| Competencies | * Strong interpersonal and communication skills * Ability to work under high pressure * Ability to integrate diverse missions and organizations * Ability to handle sensitive matters |
| **PAST APPOINTEES** | |
| Stephen P. Welby (2015 to 2017) – Deputy Assistant Secretary for Systems Engineering, Office of the Secretary of Defense; Deputy Vice President, Advanced Missiles and Unmanned Systems, Raytheon; Director, Tactical Technology Office, Deputy Director, Information Exploitation Office, Chief Scientist at Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA); Technical Staff Member, Army Research Laboratory | |
| Alan R. Shaffer (2012 to 2015) – Principal Deputy, ASD(R&E); Executive Director, Mine Resistant Ambush Protection Task Force; Tri-chair, DoD Modeling and Simulation Steering Committee; Director, Plans and Programs, Defense Research and Engineering; Director, Multi-disciplinary Systems, Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Science and Technology | |
| Zachary J. Lemnios (2011 to 2012) – Chief Technology Officer, MIT Lincoln Laboratory; Assistant Head, Solid State Division, MIT Lincoln Laboratory; Director, Information Processing Technology Office, Defense Advanced Research Projects Office; Director, Microsystems Technology Office, [DARPA](https://www.linkedin.com/company/16813?trk=prof-exp-company-name) | |

# 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)