# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# assistant secretary for special operations and low intensity conflict, Department of defense

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Armed Services |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Department of Defense is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country.[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Overview | The assistant secretary is the principal advisor to the secretary of defense on special operations and low intensity conflict.[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[3]](#endnote-3) |
| Position Reports to | Undersecretary of Defense for Policy[[4]](#endnote-4) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict currently has three deputies.[[5]](#endnote-5) The assistant secretary serves as the principal official charged with oversight over all warfighting capabilities within the senior management of the Department of Defense, after the secretary and deputy secretary.[[6]](#endnote-6) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Advises the secretary of defense on special operations and low-intensity conflict
* Has the principal duty of overall supervision of special operations and low-intensity conflict activities, including oversight of policy and resources
* Is responsible for core tasks that include, according to the United States Special Operations Command's 2007 Posture Statement: counterterrorism; unconventional warfare; direct action; special reconnaissance; foreign internal defense; civil affairs, information and psychological operations; and counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction[[7]](#endnote-7)
* Oversees the Department of Defense’s counter-narcotics program
* Has policy oversight for strategic capabilities and force transformation and resources, which includes oversight of capability development to include general-purpose forces; space and information capabilities; nuclear and conventional strike capabilities; and missile defense
* Serves as the principal official charged with oversight over all warfighting capabilities within the senior management of the DOD, after the secretary and deputy secretary[[8]](#endnote-8)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Prior public or private management experience for multiple specialized work divisions representing hundreds of employees and hundreds of millions of dollars in funding
* Senior executive oversight experience within the Department of Defense (a plus)
* Previous military service in special forces or low-intensity conflict units (a plus)
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| Competencies | * Ability to provide resource oversight for multiple low-intensity conflict topic areas and operations
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills
* Ability to work under pressure
* Ability to handle sensitive matters
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Michael D. Lumpkin (2013 to 2017) – Senior Executive, Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs; Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense; Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict[[9]](#endnote-9) |
| Michael A. Sheehan (2011 to 2013) – Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Police Department; Assistant Secretary General of Mission Support for the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations; Ambassador-at-Large for Counter Terrorism[[10]](#endnote-10) |
| Michael G. Vickers (2007 to 2011) – Senior Vice President, Strategic Studies, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; Army Special Forces Officer; Special Forces Officer; CIA Operations Officer[[11]](#endnote-11) |

1. <http://www.defense.gov/About-DoD> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. <http://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/> [↑](#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. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. 2017 data [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. <http://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/PartnershipStrategyandStabilityOperations/> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. <http://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. <http://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. <http://policy.defense.gov/OUSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS00/20130214/100260/HHRG-113-AS00-Bio-SheehanM-20130214.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS26/20130227/100320/HHRG-113-AS26-Bio-VickersM-20130227.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)