# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, Department of the interior

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| **OVERVIEW** | |
| Senate Committee | Energy and Natural Resources |
| Agency Mission | The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation’s natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives and affiliated island communities.[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Overview | The assistant secretary for insular areas leads the Office for Insular Areas and acts for the secretary in all of the insular territories. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500[[2]](#endnote-2) (5 U.S.C. § 5315) |
| Position Reports to | Deputy Secretary and Secretary of the Interior |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** | |
| Management Scope | The Office of Insular Areas is one of five principal offices in the Department of the Interior. It has 35 employees and is made up of three divisions: policy, budget and technical assistance.[[3]](#endnote-3) In fiscal 2016, the office operated with a $605.580 million budget.[[4]](#endnote-4) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Assists, on behalf of the secretary, the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in developing more efficient and effective government by providing financial and technical assistance * Administers and oversees U.S. federal assistance provided to the freely associated states and federated state of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau under the compacts of free association * Serves as a focal point for the management of relations between the United States and the insular areas by developing and promoting appropriate federal policies[[5]](#endnote-5) |
| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** | |
| Requirements | * Prior government experience, either from Capitol Hill or a similar state function (helpful) * Knowledge of the unique needs of these territories |
| Competencies | * Strong communication skills to communicate well within the department, across different agencies and with external stakeholders * Diplomatic skills * Political savvy and sensitivity * Willingness to travel |
| **PAST APPOINTEES** | |
| Esther Puakela Kia'aina (2014 to 2017) – Deputy for Hawaii’s Department of Land and Natural Resources; Chief Advocate for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Land Asset Manager for the Kamehameha Schools[[6]](#endnote-6) | |
| Lorraine V. Faeth (2014, Acting) – Director for the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of the Interior; Senior Policy Advisor for Natural Resources, Agriculture, Energy and Environment for the office of Governor Janet Napolitano[[7]](#endnote-7) | |
| Eileen Sobeck (2013 to 2014, Acting) – Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior; Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Environment and Natural Resources Division, Department of Justice; Chief of Wildlife and Marine Resources Section for Environment and Natural Resources Division, Department of Justice[[8]](#endnote-8) | |

1. <https://www.doi.gov/whoweare/Mission-Statement> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. 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-2)
3. <https://www.doi.gov/oia/who-we-are/oia-office> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/2017-OIA-Budget-Master-for-Print.pdf> Page 4 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.doi.gov/oia/who-we-are/epk-bio> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.doi.gov/oia/who-we-are/epk-bio> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lori-faeth-b1755645> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. <https://www.commerce.gov/directory/eileensobeck> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)