# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# Undersecretary for policy, Department of transportation

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Commerce, Science and Transportation |
| Agency Mission | To ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future. |
| Position Overview | The undersecretary for policy is the long-term strategic lead for the department, serving as a principal advisor to the secretary on transportation policy matters. The undersecretary provides leadership on developing department policies, generates proposals and provides advice on legislative and regulatory initiatives across all modes of transportation. The undersecretary is third in the department’s order of succession. |
| Compensation | Level II $179,700 (5 U.S.C. § 5313)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary of Transportation[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The Office of the Undersecretary for Policy had an estimated 114 full-time equivalents in fiscal 2017.[[3]](#endnote-3) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Serves as a principal advisor to the secretary and provides leadership on developing department policies
* Generates proposals and provides advice on legislative and regulatory initiatives across all modes of transportation
* Coordinates the department’s budget and policy development functions
* Oversees department-wide grant programs, such as the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant program
* Directs transportation policy development and works to ensure that the nation’s transportation resources function as an integrated national system
* Recommends overall surface transportation policy initiatives to the secretary
* Coordinates multimodal initiatives and processes
* Is responsible for all hazardous material policymaking and overall department and agency coordination
* Reviews all proposed Department of Transportation rulemaking, legislation, testimony and reports to Congress[[4]](#endnote-4)
* Manages the day-to-day activities associated with implementing section 11143, regarding tax-exempt financing of highway projects and rail-truck facilities
* Provides leadership on developing department policy, supervises the policy activities of assistant secretaries with primary responsibility for aviation, international and other transportation policy development, and carries out other powers and duties the secretary prescribes
* Acts for the secretary when the secretary and the deputy secretary are absent or unable to serve, or when the offices of secretary and deputy secretary are vacant (49 U.S.C. 102)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Knowledge of and experience in transportation policy and financing (both public and private financing)
* Senior management experience at an organization of significant size
* Strong knowledge of the transportation industry[[5]](#endnote-5)
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| Competencies | * Strong policymaking skills[[6]](#endnote-6)
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Blair Anderson (2017 to 2017): Deputy Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; Action CFO/Deputy Assistant Secretary for Finance and Budget, Department of Transportation; Senior Advisor, Congressman John Olver[[7]](#endnote-7) |
| Peter M. Rogoff (2014 to 2016): Federal Transit Administrator, Department of Transportation; Democratic Staff Director, Transportation Subcommittee, Senate Appropriations Committee; Staff Member, Senate Appropriations Committee[[8]](#endnote-8) |
| Polly Ellen Trottenberg (2013 to 2014): Member, Freight Policy Council, Department of Transportation; Member, Federal Members, Board of Directors, U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board); Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, Office of the Undersecretary for Transportation, Department of Transportation[[9]](#endnote-9) |

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. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/mission/budget/281156/ost-fy-2018-cj-budget-5-24-17.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Romney Readiness Project position description [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/blair-anderson-0363aa11/ [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. http://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/peter\_m\_rogoff\_bio.pdf [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-9)