



# The Honorable Hung Cao

## Acting Secretary of the Navy



The Honorable Hung Cao assumed responsibility as Acting Secretary of the Navy on April 22, 2026.

After immigrating to the United States in 1975, Cao and his family moved to West Africa. He returned to Northern Virginia at the age of twelve and later graduated with the inaugural class of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. He entered the Navy as a Seaman Recruit in 1989 and was later commissioned as a Special Operations Officer from the United States Naval Academy in 1996.

As a Navy Diver, Cao led underwater missions around the world. As an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Officer, he led counter improvised threat missions for Special Warfare and Special Forces around the world with multiple deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. In his final tour of duty, he led sensitive activities, exploitation, counter-messaging and counter-drone operations in support of the Geographic Combatant Commanders and Special Operations Command. He retired from active duty in October 2021 as a Captain.

Previously, Cao served as Under Secretary of the Navy. Fifty years after arriving in Guam as a Vietnamese refugee, Cao returned as the Department of War's Senior Defense Official of Guam, whereby he provided oversight, advocacy, and support for on-island infrastructure development consistent with operational requirements. Prior to his appointment, Cao was a Vice President and Client Executive at CACI International. He helped in fielding electronic warfare packages, counter-drone technology, optical communications, photonics, enterprise IT and shipyard infrastructure optimization in support of the

Department of the Navy.

Cao is a decorated combat veteran, a qualified Navy Special Operations, EOD and Diving Officer, Naval Parachutist, and Surface Warfare Officer. He holds a bachelor's degree in Ocean Engineering, a master's degree in Applied Physics and was a Fellow with MIT Seminar XXI and Harvard Kennedy School. He is fluent in French and Vietnamese. Cao and his wife April have five children.