

# Theresa Whelan

Performing the Duties of Under Secretary of Defense for  
Policy

Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special  
Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC)



Theresa Whelan, a career member of the Senior Executive Service, is performing the duties of Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. She is also serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC). In her capacity as USD for Policy, she is responsible for advising the Secretary of Defense on all matters pertaining to the development and execution of U.S. national defense policy and strategy. Ms. Whelan brings over twenty-nine years of experience in the defense intelligence, defense policy and national intelligence communities.

Prior to assuming her current position, Ms. Whelan served as the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict from March 2016 through January 2017.

From July 2015 through March 2016, Ms. Whelan served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict.

Before returning to the Department of Defense, Ms. Whelan served as the national intelligence officer for Africa on the Director for National Intelligence's National Intelligence Council. Between 2003-2011, she held three separate deputy assistant secretary of defense (DASD) positions within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy: DASD, Homeland Defense Domains and Defense Support to Civil Authorities; DASD, Defense Continuity and Crisis Management; and DASD, African Affairs.

In addition to the deputy assistant secretary positions, her other assignments in the Department include Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's Balkans Task Force, Senior Program Director for the US/South Africa Joint Defense Committee, Countries Director for Southern Africa and West Africa, and African military capabilities analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency covering West, Central and East African countries.

Ms. Whelan has a Master of Arts in national security studies from Georgetown University, a Master of Science in national security strategy from the National War College, and a Bachelor of Arts in international relations with a minor in Russian studies from the College of William and Mary.

Her awards include two Presidential Rank Executive Awards, at the Distinguished and Meritorious levels; two Department of Defense Medals for Distinguished Civilian Service; the National Intelligence Superior Service Medal; the American University Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership; the Paul H. Nitze Award for Excellence in International Security Affairs, and the French National Order of Merit.