

Brent D. Sadler

Senior Research Fellow for Naval Warfare and Advanced Technology



Brent joined Heritage Foundation after a 26 year Navy career with numerous operational tours on nuclear powered submarines in the Pacific, personal staffs of senior Defense Department leaders, and as a military diplomat in Asia. As a senior research fellow, his focus is on maritime security and the technologies shaping our future maritime forces, especially the Navy.

A native of Springfield, Virginia, he graduated with honors of the United States Naval Academy in 1994 with a degree in Systems Engineering (robotics) and a minor in Japanese. As an Olmsted Scholar in Tokyo, Japan from 2004 to 2007, he studied at Keio University, Jochi University and the United Nations University. He has a M.A. from Jochi University and M.S. from National War College where he graduated with distinction in 2011 receiving several writing and research awards.

In 2011, he helped establish the Navy Asia Pacific Advisory Group (NAPAG), providing regionally informed comprehensive advice directly to Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO). He again served on the CNO's personal staff in 2015-2016, advising on the Asia-Pacific and as the CNO's representative to the Deputy Secretary of Defense in developing the Defense Department's Third Offset.

At Pacific Command from 2012-2015, he held numerous key positions. As lead for Maritime Strategy and Policy, he incorporated all 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) into the first regional maritime domain awareness forum; and, was instrumental in developing the \$500 million dollar Maritime Security Initiative. As Special Advisor on Japan, and a Council of Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow in Tokyo, he played a key role in revising the U.S. and Japan Defense Guidelines. As Deputy Director Strategic Synchronization Group, he oversaw a think-tank like body of over 30 advisors and analysts. Lastly, he was the Commander's representative to the Deputy Secretary of Defense responsible for developing and coordinating execution of the President's Defense Strategic Guidance—Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific resulting in over \$12 billion USD of additional monies budgeted in fiscal years 2013 through 2015 during a time of fiscal austerity.

Following his final tour on CNO's staff, Brent returned to Asia as Senior Defense Official, Defense and Naval Attaché in Malaysia. During his tenure he played a key role in coordinating responses to the USS McCain collision in August 2017, opened several politically sensitive ports and airfields to U.S. forces, oversaw unprecedented expansion of U.S. military relations, and steadied relations during the historic May 2018 national elections ushering in an opposition party for the first time since independence.

His final Navy assignment was China Branch of Navy Staff at the Pentagon.

He is married to the former Yulia Polyakova and has two daughters: Sophia and Vivienne.