

Matthew S. Axelrod

Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement



Matthew S. Axelrod currently serves as the Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement at the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security, a position to which he was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate in December 2021.

In this capacity, Matt leads a cadre of special agents and analysts dedicated to a singular mission – keeping our country's most sensitive technologies out of the world's most dangerous hands. Matt and his team help protect U.S. national security by enforcing the country's export control laws. They work to prevent exports of sensitive goods and technologies that can be put to malign purposes like weapons-of-mass-destruction proliferation, military and military-intelligence applications, terrorism, and human rights abuses. They also work to ensure that U.S. persons do not participate in unsanctioned foreign boycotts. Matt also co-leads the Disruptive

Technology Strike Force, an interagency law enforcement strike force that targets illicit actors, protects supply chains, and prevents critical technology from being acquired by authoritarian regimes and hostile nation-states.

A longtime public servant with deep criminal and national security enforcement experience, Matt previously spent over thirteen years at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), serving as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of Florida and then in a series of high-level jobs at DOJ headquarters. From 2015 to 2017, Matt served as the Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General, one of DOJ's highest-ranking officials. In that role, he advised the Deputy Attorney General and Attorney General on DOJ's most significant issues, including the most consequential criminal and national security enforcement matters. Matt directly supervised a staff of twenty-five lawyers and helped to oversee DOJ's workforce of 113,000 employees, including all of its prosecutors and law enforcement agents. In 2021, he rejoined DOJ on Inauguration Day as part of the senior leadership team, serving as Senior Counselor in the Office of the Deputy Attorney General.

Matt has also previously served as Special Counsel in the Office of the White House Counsel, where he worked on both domestic and national security matters, and as a partner in an international law firm, where he did internal investigations and white-collar defense work on behalf of companies and individuals. Matt was also one of the founding corps members at City Year, a forerunner and inspiration for the eventual AmeriCorps national service program.

Matt received his B.A. cum laude from Amherst College and his J.D. from Yale Law School, where he was Notes Editor for the Yale Law Journal. Following law school, Matt clerked for the Honorable Ralph K. Winter, Jr. on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and for the Honorable Janet C. Hall on the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut.