Biographical Information

Heidi C. Perry is Chief Technology Officer at the MIT Lincoln Laboratory. In this role, she is responsible for establishing Laboratory technology strategy in support of national security needs, by managing internal research and development investments and cultivating strategic technology relationships within government and industry. Previously she was Chief Innovation Officer and Assistant Division Head for the Division Office for Air, Missile & Maritime Defense Technology at the Laboratory. In this capacity, she led strategic initiatives for undersea systems, including the development of new approaches in autonomy technology and artificial intelligence. Before joining Lincoln Laboratory, she was the Director, System Engineering, at the Charles S. Draper Laboratory, Inc. She also served in other senior leadership roles, including the Director, Algorithms & Software and the Director, Internal R&D Portfolio. Her expertise includes guidance, navigation, and control; global position system anti-jam and ground control; autonomous systems; mission-critical software; and command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems.

Ms. Perry began her career with General Electric as a systems engineer working on the AN/BSY-2 Sonar System before moving to IBM to work as a systems engineer for avionics design and flight test programs. From IBM she moved to the Draper Laboratory as task leader for the Dolphin Navigation System Upgrade and remained with Draper for more than 20 years. During those years at the laboratory, she served as technical director for various research and development programs involving autonomous spacecraft, aircraft, robotics systems, and underwater vehicles.

In addition to chairing the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Committee that produced the 2020 report "Leveraging Unmanned Systems for Coast Guard Missions," she has served the National Academies in a number of capacities. As a Naval Studies Board member and committee member, she has chaired numerous studies on autonomous systems and emerging technologies to address strategic national security needs.   She holds a B.S. in electrical engineering and an M.S. in computer engineering.