

Karen M. St. Germain, PhD

Deputy Assistant Administrator, Systems



Dr. Karen St. Germain is the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Systems (DAAS), for NOAA's Satellite and Information Service. She guides the ongoing development and deployment of NOAA's two major satellite programs (the Joint Polar Satellite System and Geostationary Operational Environment Satellite – R series), the COSMIC-2 mission, and the Space Weather Follow-On. She also leads the development of the next-generation capabilities that will replenish and augment these systems in the future.

Prior to becoming the DAAS, Dr. St. Germain served as the Director of the Office of Systems Architecture and Advanced Planning (OSAAP) where she led enterprise-level mission architecture development and systems engineering to enable NESDIS to become a flexible, stable and responsive civil space agency in support of NOAA's mission. Dr. St. Germain is a leader in enterprise-level planning and multi-organizational programs of national significance. She is also an expert in major systems acquisition, with particular proficiency in transitioning new technology into operational systems.

Dr. St. Germain developed a deep understanding of the NESDIS mission as NOAA's lead for all aspects of system performance during the development of the successful Suomi-NPP system, from 2006 to 2011. In 2011, Dr. St. Germain accepted a position in the Space, Strategic and Intelligence Systems (SSI) Office, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (OUSD AT&L). There, she led the DoD 2014 Strategic Portfolio Review for Space, a special assignment task for the Deputy Secretary of Defense to develop a strategy and implementation plan for adapting to evolving challenges in the space domain. Dr. St. Germain also led the Remote Sensing and Prompt Strike Division within SSI, where she was responsible for acquisition shaping and oversight of DoD strategic missile warning and space-based environmental monitoring portfolio, and the Program Director of the Conventional Prompt Global Strike Program.

Before joining NOAA, Dr. St. Germain had a successful research career at the University of Massachusetts, the University of Nebraska, and the Naval Research Laboratory. She has performed research aboard ice-breakers in the Arctic and Antarctic, flown through hurricanes and tropical storms on NOAA's P-3 airplanes and measured glacial ice on a snowmobile traverse of the Greenland ice sheet. She also led the modeling and calibration of the WindSat Coriolis mission, the first space-borne radiometer to measure ocean surface wind direction.

Dr. St. Germain holds a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Union College (1987) and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Massachusetts (1993). She is also a Distinguished Graduate of the National War College, National Defense University where she earned a Master of Science degree in National Security Strategy in 2013.