



James A. Ruocco

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Platform and Weapon Portfolio Management

and

Director for Air Platforms and Weapons

Mr. Ruocco is currently the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Platform and Weapon Portfolio Management (PWPM). In this position, he is responsible for managing and analyzing major platforms and weapons capability portfolios across the department. Additionally, he is the Director for Air Platforms and Weapons and is responsible for portfolio and acquisition management, policy, and investments in all Department of Defense (DoD) aircraft-related missions and capabilities to include strategic, tactical, mobility, and special-purpose fixed-wing aircraft, air launched weapons, associated sensors and mission equipment. He influences a budget of over \$100B in DoD investments and advises the Under Secretary of Defense to shape acquisition decisions.



With more than 26 years of federal service, his career has spanned a wide range of technical, management and leadership positions, where he executed and led development, design, test, production, logistics and sustainment activities for many Defense acquisition programs.

Mr. Ruocco was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in September 2018 as Director, Air Vehicle Engineering Department. In this role, he led a workforce of nearly 1,500 government and contractor support personnel and managed an operating budget of over \$250M and influenced over \$30B in Department of Navy (DoN) investments. As the technical authority and organizational leader for all engineering, technical policy and strategy matters, he was accountable for aircraft structures, aero performance, flight controls, flying qualities, mechanical subsystems, and materials engineering. During this appointment, his role evolved into a key executive leader in reshaping the Naval Air Systems Command. In the process, he assumed dual roles as the Director for the Air Systems Group and the System Acquisition Group at the Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division and led a workforce of nearly 3,000 engineers and logisticians responsible for the development, testing, production and sustainment of all Naval Aviation systems and related programs. Mr. Ruocco was responsible for the recruitment, development, and retention of a highly skilled workforce within the systems engineering, cost analysis, air vehicle engineering, propulsion & power engineering, human systems engineering, logistics management, maintenance planning, technical data management, and a host of other technical specialties.

Previously, Mr. Ruocco was the Assistant Program Executive Officer for Engineering and Chief Engineer for the F-35 Joint Program Office from April 2016 to September 2018. He also served in several technical leadership positions during two previous tours with F-35 from April 2006 to February 2014, including Lead Engineer for the aircraft carrier-compatible F-35C, Lead Systems Engineer, and Chief Engineer for Sustainment. Notably, Mr. Ruocco led the Technical Baseline Review in 2010, which reset and restructured the \$55B F-35 development program.

In between Joint Strike Fighter assignments, Mr. Ruocco was on the staff of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for over two years, where he oversaw a broad portfolio of weapon systems and routinely advised program managers, program executive officers and the Service Acquisition Executive for all DoN programs.

Other assignments include Air Vehicle and Production Team Lead for the E-2D program from October 2003 to April 2006, Flight Test Project Lead for E-2D testing, and several years performing in-service engineering duties in support of all Naval Air Forces from March 1995 to May 2003. He served as the Engineering Department Head at the Mediterranean Repair Activity in Naples, Italy and at the Pacific Repair Activity in Okinawa, Japan. Additionally, he was an F/A-18 aircraft structures engineer and subject matter expert for corrosion prevention while stationed at Naval Aviation Depot, North Island in San Diego, Calif.

Mr. Ruocco holds a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University (1992) and a master's degree in National Resource Strategy as a distinguished graduate of the National Defense University (2010). Additionally, he graduated from Aviation Maintenance Officer School in 1995 and the Federal Executive Institute in 2014. He holds certificates from the University of Virginia and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is a member of the Acquisition Professional Community with Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certifications in Program Management and Systems Engineering. Mr. Ruocco has also received numerous Command-level recognitions and awards, as well as being a two-time recipient of the Secretary of Defense Exceptional Civilian Service Medal.