
Mark R. Jacobson, Ph.D.



Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy Office of the Secretary of the Navy

Dr. Mark R. Jacobson is the Special Assistant to the Secretary of the United States Navy, Ray Mabus. In this role, Jacobson serves as a coordinator and guide on sensitive issues and matters of direct interest and concern to the SECNAV. A member of the Navy's Senior Executive Service since 2014, Jacobson's role includes working with senior Navy leadership as a liaison within DoD and to outside groups such as Congress, the media, and other external audiences such as industry, Military Service Organizations, academia, and think-tanks.

Previously, Jacobson taught at The George Washington University's Elliot School of International Affairs and was a Senior Transatlantic Fellow at The German Marshall Fund of the United States. He has served in executive positions in government on several occasions, most recently in Kabul, Afghanistan from 2009-2011 as the Deputy Political Advisor to the ISAF Commander General Stanley McChrystal and later as the first Deputy NATO Senior Civilian Representative, Afghanistan (DSCR-A). In this capacity Jacobson was also a principal foreign policy advisor to COMISAF General David Petraeus and worked closely with the international community to find solutions to diplomatic crises that could derail the comprehensive campaign in support of the Government of Afghanistan. Jacobson also served on the staff of the Senate Armed Services from 2007-2009 and from 2003-2005 taught courses on U.S. counterterrorism policy while the Visiting Scholar for International Security and Public Policy at the Mershon Center. Jacobson began his government service in 1998 as a Presidential Management Fellow, serving in various civilian roles at the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff to include at the Joint Staff Current Operations Directorate (J-33) Special Operations Division and as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy). As a result of his efforts during this time, he was nominated and became a finalist for the Partnership for Public Service's first Service to America Award in 2002. Jacobson is also ardent supporter of the next generation of public policy professionals and is actively involved in non-profit and university mentoring programs.

Jacobson's 20 years of military service includes eight years enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve as a Psychological Operations Specialist. In 2001 he was commissioned as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve. He is trained as a Defense attaché and strategic debriefer and has mobilized in support of NATO and U.S. military operations including mobilizations for *Operation Joint Endeavor* (1996) and *Operation Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan (2006) where he conducted a variety of U.S. and NATO Special Operations missions.

Jacobson is a frequent public speaker and has testified before Congress and his commentary appears in national and international print media such as *Foreign Policy* and *The Daily Beast*.

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His regular television and radio appearances include CNN's Crossfire, and The Situation Room, MSNBC's All In with Chris Hayes, Up with Steve Kornacki, and Hardball, C-SPAN's Washington Journal, FOX's Kelly Files and The O'Reilly Factor. Jacobson is a life-Member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a Senior Advisor to the Truman National Security Project. A graduate of the University of Michigan, Jacobson holds a B.A. in history a Masters from the Department of War Studies at King's College, London and earned his Ph.D. in Military History and Strategic Studies from The Ohio State University.