
James A. Ruocco



Director, Air Vehicle Engineering Department Naval Air Systems Command

Mr. Ruocco was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in September 2018, and he currently serves as Director, Air Vehicle Engineering Department. He leads a workforce of nearly 1,500 government and contractor support personnel and manages an operating budget of over \$250M, as well as influences over \$30B in Department of Navy (DoN) investments. Mr. Ruocco is the technical authority and organizational leader for all engineering, technical policy and strategy matters, with accountability for aircraft structures, aero performance, flight controls, flying qualities, mechanical subsystems, and materials engineering.

Prior to his current assignment, 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 also on the staff of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, where he oversaw a broad portfolio of weapon systems and routinely advised program managers, program executive officers and the politically-appointed Service Acquisition Executive for all DoN programs.

Mr. Ruocco has over 24 years of federal service, spanning a wide range of technical, management and leadership positions, executing and leading development, design, test, production, logistics and sustainment activities for many defense acquisition 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, as well as several years performing in-service engineering duties in support of all Naval Air Forces at home and abroad from March 1995 to May 2003. He served as the Engineering Department Head at the Mediterranean Repair Activity in Naples, Italy, as well as the Pacific Repair Activity in Okinawa, Japan, and 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 graduated from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University with a bachelor's of science degree in aerospace engineering in 1992. He then graduated from Aviation Maintenance Officer School in 1995. He earned a master's degree in national resource strategy as a distinguished graduate of the National Defense University in 2010. He is also a 2014 graduate of the Federal Executive Institute. 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 is also the recipient of numerous Command-level recognitions and awards, as well as the Secretary of Defense Exceptional Civilian Service Medal.