



James B. Petro

Director, Research and Development



Dr. Ben Petro, a Tier 3 member of the Senior Executive Service, is Director of the Research and Development (RD) Directorate for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). Dr. Petro leads DTRA's research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) activities. He directs a geographically-dispersed military and civilian workforce of more than 450 Ph.D-level engineers and scientists and executes an annual budget of more than \$1.2 billion.

Dr. Petro is responsible for the development of U.S. Joint Force capabilities to operate in WMD environments. He delivers innovative solutions that meet current mission requirements while anticipating and preparing for emerging and future threats through fundamental and applied research. As one of the DoD's S&T Executives, he is the senior DTRA S&T interface with the Military and Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)).

Prior to assuming his current position, Dr. Petro served as the Director, Defense Research Enterprise in OUSD(R&E), where he developed and oversaw implementation of policies, practices, and programs to strengthen DoD's research institutions, infrastructure, and technical workforce to accelerate modernization of military capabilities. He also previously served in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs as the Principal Director and acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense, where he led the DoD's Chemical and Biological Defense Program.

Dr. Petro served on the White House National Security Council staff where he developed, oversaw, and coordinated Federal implementation of policies to address challenges from naturally occurring infectious diseases and chem-bio (CB) weapons. Prior to serving at the White House, he directed the Department of Homeland Security's RDT&E portfolio for countering WMD threats. Dr. Petro entered federal service as an Intelligence Officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency, where he led a suite of programs to counter CB weapons threats.

Dr. Petro has a Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology from Vanderbilt University, a M.S. in Strategic Intelligence from the National Defense Intelligence College, and a B.S. in Biotechnology from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He is an alumnus of the Federal Executive Institute's Leadership for a Democratic Society, Harvard Kennedy School's Senior Executive Fellows, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Seminar XXI programs. He has published in peer-reviewed journals including *Science*, *Studies in Intelligence*, and *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism*. Ben is a recipient of the Secretary of Defense Exceptional Civilian Service Medal, the National Security Council Outstanding Service Award, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency Meritorious Civilian Service Medal, the Defense Intelligence Agency Meritorious Civilian Service Medal, the Environmental Protection Agency's Bronze Medal, the Central Intelligence Agency Studies in Intelligence Award and the Director of National Intelligence Galileo Award.