

Dr. Rhys M. Williams

Director of Research and Development



Dr. Rhys M. Williams, 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. Williams leads the research, development, test, and evaluation activities for the Agency. 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 billion. He leads the Department of Defense's primary science and technology (S&T) program to develop capabilities to detect, deter, and defeat foreign chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear Weapons of Destruction (WMD), as well as improvised threat devices. In addition, he is responsible for the development of capabilities for U.S. forces to operate in WMD environments. As one of the S&T Executives for DoD, Dr. Williams is the senior Agency S&T interface with the Military Services and the DoD, Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OSD/R&E).

Prior to assuming his current position, Dr. Williams served as the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation R&D at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, where he led an organization focused on basic and applied research and development (R&D) to detect foreign nuclear weapons development, testing, and the illicit movement of nuclear material. Dr. Williams specializes in issues at the intersection of technology development and national security policy. He has led R&D and analytical programs in both the public and private sectors. As a member of the technical staff of a large professional services corporation, Dr. Williams conducted research and analysis for U.S. Government clients interested in the impact of foreign R&D programs on U.S. national security. As director of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Division at the U.S. Department of Energy, he led one of the largest U.S. Government multi-disciplinary efforts focused on the analysis of foreign nuclear weapons, materials, and programs.

Dr. Williams holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Miami University; a Master of Arts in International Science and Technology Policy from the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University; and a Ph.D. in Public Policy, with an emphasis in science and technology policy in a national security context from the School of Public Policy, George Mason University. A former submarine officer, Dr. Williams was qualified as a nuclear power plant manager through the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and also served as a nuclear weapons officer. He is the author of a number of publications, including a National Intelligence Estimate. Dr. Williams is a recipient of the 2019 Presidential Rank Award for Senior Executives.