

Michael G. Vickers

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict & Interdependent Capabilities

Michael G. (“Mike”) Vickers was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict & Interdependent Capabilities) on July 23, 2007. He is the senior civilian advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense on the capabilities and operational employment of special operations forces, strategic forces, and conventional forces. He is also the senior civilian advisor on counterterrorism strategy, irregular warfare, and force transformation.



Prior to his appointment as ASD (SO/LIC&IC), Mr. Vickers served as Senior Vice President, Strategic Studies, at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA). In this capacity, Mr. Vickers provided advice on Iraq strategy to President Bush and his war cabinet. He also was a senior advisor to the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, and Executive Director of the QDR “Red Team,” which provided an assessment of the QDR for the Deputy Secretary and Vice Chairman. In late 2005, Mr. Vickers conducted an independent assessment of special operations forces (“The Downing Report”) for the Secretary of Defense. He is the author of numerous publications, among which is “The Revolution in War” (2004).

From 1973 to 1986, Mr. Vickers served as an Army Special Forces Non-Commissioned Officer, Special Forces Officer, and CIA Operations Officer. During this period, Mr. Vickers had operational and combat experience in Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia. His operational experience spans covert action and espionage, unconventional warfare, counterterrorism (including hostage rescue operations), counterinsurgency, and foreign internal defense.

During the mid-1980s, Mr. Vickers was the principal strategist for the largest covert action program in the CIA’s history: the paramilitary operation that drove the Soviet army out of Afghanistan. Mr. Vickers oversaw a major change in U.S. strategy, provided strategic and operational direction to an insurgent force of more than 300 unit commanders, 150,000 full-time fighters, and 500,000 part-time fighters, coordinated the efforts of more than ten foreign governments, and controlled an annual budget in excess of \$2 billion in current dollars.

Mr. Vickers received his B.A., with honors, from the University of Alabama. He also holds an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.