



Press Release

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Naval Surface Warfare Center Technical Director Retires

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Technical Director, Stephen E. Mitchell, retired on March 30 after more than 43 years of continuous service within the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense.

“Throughout his career, Steve has worked tirelessly to serve our Navy and our nation,” said Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy, Naval Sea Systems Commander. “His many technical contributions have increased our Nation’s security.”

He began his public service life in 1968 as a research chemist at Naval Sea System Command’s (NAVSEA) Naval Ordnance Center, Indian Head. Early in his career in the field of energetics, Mr. Mitchell developed a family of improved propellants for use in Navy gun systems at Naval Ordnance Center Indian Head. He established new, safer and more effective energetics processing methods, transforming processes that were decades old.

In 2002, he was named Executive Director of NSWC Indian Head. As senior civilian leader of the \$1.6 billion Navy facility, Mr. Mitchell oversaw approximately 1,800 employees and was responsible for applied research, exploratory and advanced development, production and in-service support for energetics systems used in ordnance and weapons. During his tenure, he transformed the division from a predominantly ordnance production organization to a world-class laboratory focused on rapid transition of technology to the warfighter. Most notably, he led the rapid development and fielding of several unique thermobaric weapons, including the renowned BLU-118 cave-buster bomb for use in Afghanistan—delivered in just 67 days after 9/11. The new technology provided our forces a stand-off capability to engage enemy forces in cave and tunnel networks, significantly reducing the threat to warfighters on the ground.

He was named Technical Director of NSWC in 2007 and led eight NSWC divisions located across the country, representing more than 25 percent of the Navy’s scientists and engineers. Under his direction, NSWC increased productivity, Fleet support and combat readiness resulting in more than \$500 million in savings that were returned to customers and reapplied to meet urgent requirements. NSWC also delivered critical technical support to coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, reducing the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and counter radio-controlled IEDs, saving countless lives. Mitchell oversaw significant developments in directed energy, high energy lasers and high power microwaves, which have demonstrated military utility in the laboratory, field exercises and in operational deployments.

"Steve's dedication to technical excellence made an enormous impact on the warfare centers," said Rear Admiral Jim Shannon, Commander, Naval Surface Warfare Center. "His forward-thinking leadership over the past five years has kept us focused on providing the best support possible for our nation's warfighters."

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