



# Rear Admiral Joanna Nunan

Military Advisor to the Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Coast Guard



Rear Admiral Nunan assumed the duties of Military Advisor to the Secretary of Homeland Security in April 2015. Her primary responsibility is to provide counsel to the Secretary in affairs concerning the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense.

A Bridgeport, Connecticut native, Rear Admiral Nunan graduated from the Coast Guard Academy in 1987. Her early sea duty was in the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and Western Pacific before she became the last commanding officer of the WWII era USCGC IRONWOOD in Kodiak, Alaska, and subsequently the first commanding officer of its state of the art replacement, the 225-foot SPAR.

Ashore, she served as Deputy Sector Commander in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Sector Commander, Honolulu, Hawaii. (The Sector position includes the following roles: Captain of the Port, Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator, Federal On Scene Coordinator, Officer In Charge of Marine Inspection, and Federal Maritime Security Coordinator.) Staff assignments have involved Academy Admissions, Personnel Services, Civil Rights, Innovation, and most notably, serving as Military Assistant to Secretary of Transportation Norman H. Mineta. Most recently, she served as Chief of Staff at the Coast Guard Force Readiness Command in Norfolk, Virginia.



Her professional studies began with a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1991. In 1999, she earned her Merchant Mariner License as Master (1,600 Tons), Second Mate (2,000 Tons) and Third Mate (Unlimited). From 2002 to 2003, she was a Seminar XXI Fellow in MIT's Center for International Studies, and in 2003-2004 a participant in the Executive Potential Program, under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Leadership Development Academy. In 2006, she was assigned as the Coast Guard Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a bi-partisan think tank in Washington, DC. She also completed the 2012-2013 Homeland Security Executive Leaders Program at the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

Rear Admiral Nunan's personal awards include the Secretary of Transportation Gold Medal for Outstanding Achievement, DOT Outstanding Public Service Award, Legion of Merit, three CG Meritorious Service Medals, recognition via an American Samoa Senate Concurrent Resolution, and selection as the CG's first Female Elite Athlete of the Year.