

Hon. Jay M. Cohen, Rear Admiral, USN (ret.)



Jay M. Cohen is a native of New York. He was commissioned in 1968 upon graduation from the United States Naval Academy. He holds a joint Ocean Engineering degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Master of Science in Marine Engineering and Naval Architecture from MIT.

His early Navy assignments included service on conventional and nuclear submarines. From 1985 to 1988 Cohen commanded USS HYMAN G. RICKOVER (SSN 709).

Following command, he served on the U.S. Atlantic Fleet as a senior member of the Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board, responsible for certifying the safe operation of nuclear powered ships and crews.

From 1991 to 1993, he commanded the submarine tender USS L.Y. SPEAR (AS 36) including a deployment to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation DESERT STORM.

After Spear, he reported to the Secretary of the Navy as Deputy Chief of Navy Legislative Affairs. During this assignment, Cohen was responsible for supervising all Navy Congressional liaison.

Cohen was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral in October 1997 and reported to the Joint Staff as Deputy Director for Operations responsible to the President and DoD leaders for strategic weapons release authority.

In June 1999, he assumed duties as Director Navy Y2K Project Office responsible for transitioning all Navy computer systems into the new century.

In June 2000, Cohen was promoted in rank and became the 20th Chief of Naval Research. He served during war as the Department of the Navy Chief Technology Officer (a direct report to the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps). Responsible for the \$2B+/year Navy and Marine Corps Science and Technology (S&T) Program (involving basic research to applied technology portfolios and contracting), Cohen coordinated investments with other U.S. and international S&T providers to rapidly meet war fighter combat needs. After an unprecedented five and a half year assignment as Chief of Naval Research, Rear Admiral Cohen retired from the Navy on February 1, 2006.

Unanimously confirmed by the US Senate, Cohen was sworn in as Under Secretary for Science & Technology at the Department of Homeland Security (responsible for DHS Research, Development, Test and Evaluation) on August 10, 2006 (the day of the British Airways liquid explosive plot in England). At the time of his assuming this position, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 U.S. Senate Appropriations Report described DHS S&T as “a rudderless ship without a clear way to get back on course”. Through Cohen’s leadership and the people and programs he put in place, the FY 2008 Senate Appropriations Report stated the committee “is pleased with the rapid progress S&T appears to be making...” and in FY 2009 the Congress added \$63M to the nearly \$1B DHS S&T budget and directed that Cohen be given acquisition authority over his responsible programs. The output focused, customer oriented transformation of DHS S&T (from the lowest morale federal government component in 2006 to amongst the highest in 2008) is a success story that is captured in Hill testimony, press articles, international partnerships and a recent National Geographic TV special “Hi-Tech War on Terror” that documents the high risk/high gain innovation portfolio which Cohen put in place to make the nation safer. The new administration will continue to build on this solid foundation.