



Alexis Lasselle Ross

President, Apex Defense Strategies, LLC

Alexis Lasselle Ross is the President of Apex Defense Strategies, LLC, a strategic advisory firm that guides companies as they navigate the defense market.

Ross founded Apex following a two-decade career as an executive in both the public and private sectors. Most recently, Ross performed strategic planning at General Dynamics, advising corporate leadership on managing critical issues and navigating government business. Prior to entering the private sector, Ross served in a variety of senior positions in both the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government. She served as the deputy chief of staff to Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper, advising the secretary and ensuring execution of Department of Defense policy, programs, organizational restructuring, and external communications. During her tenure, she performed the duties of the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, leading the department's healthcare and human resources systems during the early response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, Ross served as the deputy assistant secretary of the army for strategy and acquisition reform, where she designed and implemented improvements to the Army acquisition system, including new policies on intellectual property and advanced manufacturing.



Prior to her appointments to the Department of Defense, Ross served on the Armed Services Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives as a professional staff member specializing in government acquisition policy and acquisition reform. Ross also worked at the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission as a deputy director responsible for designing alternatives to the DOD healthcare system. Prior to her work on the Commission, Ross served for seven years as a civil servant advising senior Army leadership in the Pentagon. Ross began her career at the Armed Services Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives where she served in several capacities, including as a professional staff member on the Readiness Subcommittee.

Ross is active in both the public policy and business communities by contributing her expertise on the Department of Defense's acquisition system, the U.S. defense industrial base, and the planning and execution of large-scale change within complex organizations. She is a subject matter expert supporting the Army Science Board, a senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a senior fellow at the National Defense Industrial Association, a member of the Leadership Council for Women in National Security (LCWINS), and a principal at Pallas Advisors. Ross received a doctorate in public policy from George Mason University. She is a graduate of the Naval War College with a Master of Science degree in national security and strategic studies. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in international relations from Bucknell University.