# Chad Cary to Lead NOAA Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations



Rear Adm. Chad Cary will serve as the director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. (Image Credit: NOAA)

By David Hall, NOAA Communications, August 2, 2024

The U.S. Senate confirmed on Thursday President Biden's nomination of NOAA Rear Adm. Chad Cary to lead the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO).

"Supporting the nation's environmental and economic security is one of the Biden-Harris Administration's top priorities and the NOAA Corps, NOAA's fleet, and the dedicated professionals who operate these critical components of our infrastructure are vital in fulfilling that mission," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "Rear Adm. Cary's leadership will ensure that we can continue to provide essential services to the public – from hurricane forecasts to nautical charts. I congratulate him on his confirmation to serve as the next

director of OMAO and the NOAA Corps and thank him for his service to our nation."

In addition to leading the NOAA Corps – one of the nation's eight uniformed services – Cary will oversee NOAA's fleet of 15 research and survey ships and 10 specialized aircraft, including the agency's "hurricane hunters," all of which are operated by a combination of NOAA Corps officers and civilians.

"Rear Adm. Cary is a proven leader who has the skills, experience and dedication needed to advance NOAA's science, service and stewardship mission," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "I am confident he will lead the NOAA Corps and NOAA fleet both capably and effectively as we work together to meet the challenges of a dynamic world."

Cary has served in many operational and management assignments with NOAA, most recently as deputy director of the NOAA Corps and OMAO's deputy director for operations. In that capacity, he oversaw the day-to-day operations of OMAO's marine, aviation and uncrewed systems operations, as well as OMAO's health and cyber services.

He has held command positions aboard NOAA ships Reuben Lasker and John N. Cobb. He has also served as the director of the NOAA Corps Commissioned Personnel Center and applied his at-sea and shoreside operational experience and expertise to support NOAA Fisheries, NOAA's National Weather Service and NOAA headquarters.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to continue serving the nation alongside our highly skilled and dedicated workforce," said Cary. "I would also like to thank my predecessor, Vice Adm. (select) Nancy Hann, for her vision, courageous leadership and service to the nation."

Cary was born and raised in Alaska. He earned a bachelor's degree in environmental science with an emphasis in marine

sciences from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before joining the NOAA Corps in 2001. He also holds a master’s degree in geography from Portland State University and a graduate certificate in legislative studies from Georgetown University.