

Jim Thomas
Vice President and Director of Studies
Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments



Jim Thomas is Vice President and Director of Studies at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. He oversees CSBA's research programs and directs the Strategic and Budgetary Studies staff.

Prior to joining CSBA, he was Vice President of Applied Minds, Inc., a private research and development company specializing in rapid, interdisciplinary technology prototyping. Before that, Jim served for thirteen years in a variety of policy, planning and resource analysis posts in the Department of Defense, culminating in his dual appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Resources and Plans and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy. In these capacities, he was responsible for the development of the Defense Strategy, conventional force planning, resource assessment, and the oversight of war plans. He spearheaded the 2005-2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), and was the principal author of the QDR Report to Congress.

Jim began his career in national security at Los Alamos National Laboratory, analyzing foreign technological lessons learned from the first Gulf War. After serving as research assistant to Ambassador Paul H. Nitze, Jim joined the Department of Defense as a Presidential Management Intern in 1993 and undertook developmental management assignments across the Department of Defense over the next two years. From 1995 to 1998, he managed a NATO counter-proliferation initiative and wrote three reports endorsed by Allied Foreign and Defense Ministers to integrate countering-WMD as a mission area into NATO post-Cold War force planning. From 1998 to 1999, he was seconded to the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, where he wrote Adelphi Paper 333, *The Military Challenges of Transatlantic Coalitions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). From 1999 to 2001, Jim worked in the Secretary's Strategy Office, playing a lead role developing the Department's Defense Strategy and force planning construct for the 2001 QDR. From 2001 to 2003, he served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. He was promoted to the Senior Executive Service in 2003.

Jim received the Department of Defense Medal for Exceptional Civilian Service in 1997 for his work at NATO, and the Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service, the Department's highest civilian award, in 2006 for his strategy work.

Jim is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He holds a B.A. degree with high honors from the College of William and Mary, an M.A. degree from the University of Virginia, and an M.A. degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

A former Reserve Naval officer, Jim attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander.