



PROFILE:

Dr. Margot McCarthy Australia's new National Security Adviser.

On 3 February 2012, Dr Margot McCarthy was appointed the Australian Government's National Security Adviser. The National Security Adviser provides a high level of leadership, direction and coordination to the national security community as well as leads the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's (PM&C) National Security and International Policy Group.

The National Security Adviser is the principal source of advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of PM&C on all policy matters relating to the security of the nation and oversees the implementation of all national security policy.

Dr McCarthy brings to the job strong skills and experience from 18 years in the national security community. She was appointed Deputy National Security Adviser in March 2010 and took up the role as Acting National Security Adviser when Mr Duncan Lewis AO was promoted to Secretary of the Department of Defence last September.

In her previous role as Deputy National Security Adviser, Dr McCarthy provided whole-of-government leadership on a range of national security policy issues, including as co-chair of the National Counter-Terrorism Committee (NCTC) and co-chair of the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC) – intergovernmental committees under the Council of Australian Governments.

As co-chair of the NEMC, Dr McCarthy was closely involved in the development of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR). The NSDR provides guidance to federal, state, territory and local governments, business and community leaders and the not-for-profit sector on disaster management. Dr McCarthy has been a vocal supporter of the NSDR's focus on building disaster resilient communities across Australia.

During the devastating events of the 2010-11 disaster season, Dr McCarthy played a strong leadership role in disaster relief efforts. She was actively involved in the coordination of Australian Government assistance provided to those affected by the Queensland floods, Cyclone Yasi, the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent tsunami and nuclear crisis.

Dr McCarthy has worked in a range of national security roles including as a Deputy Secretary in the Department of Defence and head of the Defence Security Authority, as Assistant Secretary of Defence and Intelligence in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as Deputy Director of Intelligence in the Defence Signals Directorate and Principal Adviser to the Secretary of the Department of Defence.

Dr McCarthy is a graduate of Oxford University with a D.Phil in English Literature and, as a British Council Chevening Scholar, completed a Masters of Science in Management at the London School of Economics and Political Science.