



Michael Pezzullo AO

Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs

Biography

Michael Pezzullo AO was appointed Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs on 20 December 2017.

Within the Home Affairs Portfolio, Michael leads the Department responsible for the coordination of strategy, planning and policy related to issues affecting Australia's domestic security. The Department works with the Portfolio's statutory independent agencies to deliver national policy and programs in several areas, including law enforcement; counter-terrorism; countering violent extremism; cyber security; countering espionage and foreign interference; critical infrastructure protection; emergency management; transport, civil maritime and aviation security; customs and border protection; trade and travel facilitation; immigration and citizenship; and multicultural affairs.

Michael was previously Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, a position to which he was appointed on 13 October 2014. In this role, he oversaw the integration of the Department with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) on 1 July 2015, including the standing-up of the Australian Border Force as the Department's operational arm.

Prior to this, Michael was Chief Executive Officer of the ACBPS from February 2013, having joined the Service as its Chief Operating Officer in July 2009. As CEO, Michael was charged with implementing and overseeing reforms in ACBPS's business processes and systems, and its workforce culture and capability. From September 2013, he was the senior official who oversaw Operation Sovereign Borders and the related Joint Agency Task Force.

Before joining ACBPS, Michael was Deputy Secretary, Strategy in the Department of Defence, having been appointed to that position in January 2006. Here, he was responsible for defence strategy and planning, force structure development, the strategic policy aspects of Australian Defence Force operations, Defence's international security relationships, and the delivery of national security programs in areas such as export controls, counter-proliferation and Defence cooperation with other countries. He also had oversight of the Department's ministerial support and public affairs programs.

Michael joined the Department of Defence as a graduate in 1987. He worked in Defence until 1992 in a variety of strategic policy and intelligence positions. He then transferred to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, where he worked in the International Division.

In March 1993, he joined the staff of the Foreign Minister, Senator the Hon Gareth Evans QC. He remained in Parliament House until December 2001, including serving five years as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Kim Beazley MP.

In February 2002, he rejoined the Department of Defence as an Assistant Secretary in the Corporate Services and Infrastructure Group (now Defence Support Group). In March 2004, he was promoted to the position of Head Infrastructure. In July 2004, he was transferred into the newly formed role of Chief Of Staff Australian Defence Headquarters and Head of Coordination and Public Affairs Division. Between February 2008 and May 2009 he led the Defence White Paper team and was also the principal author of the 2009 Defence White Paper.

Michael has a BA (Hons) in History from Sydney University. He enjoys being with his family, cricket and rugby league, and reading (anything on military history, international relations, intelligence, and political biographies).

On 8 June 2020, Michael was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia (general Division) as part of the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List.