



**Department of
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News Release

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Riojas Sworn in as VA Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security and Preparedness

WASHINGTON – Jose D. Riojas, a West Point graduate and former executive with the University of Texas at El Paso, took the oath of office yesterday as Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security and Preparedness within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

“I am honored to be part of the VA team,” Riojas said. “I look forward to coordinating and developing internal VA policies and collaborating within the inter-agency community in matters of emergency management, continuity of operations, domestic incident management and national security programs while ensuring continued service to veterans.

“I also look forward to being an active participant in the transformation of the VA into an agile, adaptive organization that is capable of leading change,” he added.

In his new position, Riojas will coordinate VA’s emergency management, preparedness, security, and law enforcement activities to ensure the Department can continue providing benefits and services to Veterans under all circumstances.

His former post at the University of Texas at El Paso, where he has been vice president of strategic initiatives, included efforts in support of homeland security, border security and economic development.

Riojas has served as the director of the Department of Homeland Security’s Center of Excellence for Border Security and Immigration. He also has served as the executive director for the Center for Defense Systems Research, a Department of Defense research center headquartered in El Paso.

Riojas, a 1976 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, served in operational assignments throughout the world, including Korea, Germany and Southwest Asia during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College.

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Riojas Sworn In 2/2/2/2

His 30-year military career included assignments with the Department of State, as the Army's representative on the Joint Requirements Oversight Panel, and executive officer to the Army Chief of Staff. He served in five different Army divisions and commanded at the battery, battalion, division artillery and task force levels.

Riojas' last military assignment was as the commanding general of Joint Task Force North, providing military resources throughout the continental United States to support law enforcement agencies to interdict transnational threats, including terrorists, weapons of mass destruction and narco-terrorism.

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