

Mr. Lawrence F. Ayers Jr.

Director of Management and Technology
Defense Mapping Agency
August 1982 – July 1987



Mr. Lawrence F. Ayers earned a BS in civil engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1954 and received an MPA from the University of Indiana in 1966. He received a Ford Foundation Career Education Award in 1962 and was named a fellow of the National Institute of Public Affairs in 1966.

Mr. Ayers completed a tour of active duty in the Army in 1957 and entered the field of mapping, charting, and geodesy. After working as a surveyor for the Virginia State Highway Department, he held numerous positions in topographic, geodetic, and research and development (R&D) engineering posts with the U.S. Army Engineer Research Laboratory at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. In 1968–69 he was program manager, Advanced Systems Development Office, Defense Intelligence Agency, and then spent three years as chief, Topographic Sciences Branch, Environmental Sciences Division, Office of the Chief of Staff (R&D), Department of the Army. He joined the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA) in 1972 as director of the R&D program; he served as technical director of the DMA Aerospace Center in St. Louis from 1974 to 1979. Returning to Washington, DC, Mr. Ayers served as deputy director of Production and Operations from until 1982.

Mr. Ayers is the author of a dozen scientific and technical papers published in professional and trade associations' publications and has appeared before Congress as an expert in the field of geographic information. He is past president of the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping and has served as chairman of the Research Committee of the American Society of Photogrammetry. He headed the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Cartography Conference, represented the United States at various North Atlantic Treaty Organization meetings, and was the U.S. delegate responsible for developing cooperative agreements in mapping, charting, and geodesy with a number of foreign nations. He served on the National Academy of Sciences Mapping Sciences Committee; the Board of Advisors to the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA); and the Highway Committee of the Transportation Research Board; the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) study to address the role of the federal government in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI); he also served on two NAPA panels, one addressing geographic information for the twenty-first century and the other addressing the legal limits on access to and disclosure of disaster information. He also served on the board of directors of the Open GIS Consortium. He retired from the federal government in July 1987.

Mr. Ayers was awarded the rank of Distinguished Executive in the Senior Executive Service in December 1983; in 1986 he was awarded the rank of Meritorious Executive in the Senior Executive Service. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Science and Engineering from Ferris State University in 1995 and was named a Distinguished Alumnus of Virginia Tech in 1999. In 2003 he was inducted into the National Imagery and Mapping Agency Hall of Fame.