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Mike Spirtas Joins IDA as Director, Research Programs

ALEXANDRIA, VA (December 2023) – Mike Spirtas assumed duties today as Director, Research Programs.

“I’m pleased to welcome Mike to IDA’s leadership team,” said IDA President Norty Schwartz. “He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in program management of federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs), including engagement with government sponsors, Contracting Officer’s Representatives and Washington Headquarters Services.”

In his new role, Spirtas manages the FFRDC research program and oversees day-to-day relationships with sponsors. “I look forward to making significant contributions to the IDA research program and collaborating with our sponsors to help them understand the challenges they face,” said Spirtas.

Spirtas came to IDA from RAND, where he served as Associate Director of the National Security Research Division (NSRD). He previously served as Associate Director of RAND’s International Security and Defense Policy Program within NSRD, where he helped oversee a \$25 million research portfolio. He has more than 20 years’ experience in research on critical issues, including the National Defense Strategy, defense strategic guidance, defense planning scenarios, organizing for space operations, and command and control. In addition, Spirtas served two Intergovernmental Personnel Act tours, one with the Air Staff as a concept developer and another at the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy as a force developer.

Prior to joining RAND, Spirtas was a senior fellow at the Center for National Policy, where he ran projects on Cuba, North Korea, China-Taiwan relations, and international trade. Before that, he was a fellow at the U.S. Center for Research and Education on Strategy and Technology. He also served as an adjunct professor at George Washington University and American University. Spirtas earned two master’s degrees and a doctorate in political science from Columbia University.

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