

Online Journal of Space Communication

Volume 8
Issue 15 *Women in Space (Spring 2009)*

Article 39

October 2021

Profile of Ellen M. Pawlikowski

Mary Frost

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Recommended Citation

Frost, Mary (2021) "Profile of Ellen M. Pawlikowski," *Online Journal of Space Communication*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 15 , Article 39.

Available at: <https://ohioopen.library.ohio.edu/spacejournal/vol8/iss15/39>

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Maj. Gen. Ellen M. Pawlikowski is the Deputy Director, National Reconnaissance Office, Chantilly, Va. She manages all Air Force personnel and resources assigned to the NRO and serves as the senior adviser to the DNRO on all military matters. As the Chief Operating Officer, she is responsible for all mission-related acquisition and operations of overhead reconnaissance systems to meet the needs of the intelligence community and the Department of Defense

General Pawlikowski entered the Air Force in 1978 through the ROTC program at New Jersey Institute of Technology. She attended the University of California at Berkeley, Calif., and received a Doctorate of Philosophy in chemical engineering in December 1981, entering active duty at McClellan AFB, Calif., in April 1982. The general has served in a variety of technical management, leadership and staff positions, and she has served as Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Counterproliferation in Office of the Secretary of Defense. Prior to her current assignment, she was Vice Commander, Space & Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.

EDUCATION

- 1978 Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark
- 1981 Doctorate of Philosophy in chemical engineering, University of California, Berkeley
- 1984 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 1990 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 1991 Program Managers Course, Defense Systems Management College, Fort Belvoir, Va.
- 1994 Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. April 1982 - December 1984, Director, Gas Research and Development, Technical Operations Division, McClellan AFB, Calif.
2. December 1984 - March 1986, Chief, Mass Spectrometry and Micro-beam Instruments Branch, Technical Operations Division, McClellan AFB, Calif.
3. March 1986 - December 1987, Command Systems Plans Manager, Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick AFB, Fla.
4. December 1987 - July 1989, Chief, Plans and Programs Division, Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick AFB, Fla.

5. July 1989 - July 1990, student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
6. June 1990 - December 1991, Deputy Chief, Special Projects Division, Rome Laboratory, Griffiss AFB, N.Y.
7. December 1991 - July 1993, Senior Executive Officer, Rome Laboratory, Griffiss AFB, N.Y.
8. July 1993 - June 1994, student, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
9. June 1994 - March 1996, Director, Acquisition Management Office, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy, Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
10. March 1996 - June 1997, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Counterproliferation, Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
11. June 1997 - June 1999, Chief, Revolutionizing Training Division, Training Systems Product Group, Aeronautical Systems Center, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.
12. June 1999 - March 2000, Deputy Director, Global Power Programs, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.
13. April 2000 - March 2005, Director, Airborne Laser System Program Office, Aeronautical Systems Center, Kirtland AFB, N.M.
14. March 2005 - July 2007, Commander, Military Satellite Communications Systems Wing, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
15. July 2007 - May 2008, Vice Commander, Space & Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
16. June 2008 - present, Deputy Director, National Reconnaissance Office, Chantilly, Va.

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

- Defense Superior Service Medal
- Legion of Merit
- Defense Meritorious Service Medal Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster
- Air Force Achievement Medal
- Air Force Individual Recognition Ribbon

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1984 Commandant Trophy recipient, Squadron Officer School
- 1985 and 1986 Company Grade Officer of the Year, Air Force Technical Applications Center
- 1987 National Finalist, White House Fellowship Program

- 1992 YWCA Woman of the Year
- 1994 Defense Acquisition Research Award
- 1998 Stewart Award (Top Senior Program Manager, ASC)
- 1999 Air Force Association Management Award - Executive

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

- Second Lieutenant May 25, 1978
 - First Lieutenant May 25, 1981
 - Captain May 25, 1983
 - Major March 1, 1988
 - Lieutenant Colonel April 1, 1992
 - Colonel Oct. 1, 1996
 - Brigadier General June 1, 2005
 - Major General July 22, 2008
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1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

I got into the satellite business in 2005 when I was assigned as the MILSATCOM Systems Program Director at the Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles. Up till then , I had extensive experience in technical program management but had no experience in satellite development before that.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

I have been involved in introducing new technologies in satellite communication (digital processing, laser communication in space) and also exploring new methods for acquiring space systems such as operational responsive space.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

I think the greatest opportunity was when I took the job as director of MILSATCOM. I had the opportunity to introduce new techniques to managing space acquisition programs and to introduce new technologies. I was able to introduce new techniques to managing complex system of systems management. This included techniques for configuration control and requirements management.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The greatest obstacle was overcoming old think. The culture change has been much harder than the technical change.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

I see huge opportunities for commercial space ventures to grow as the advances in military space. This will be a big boon for national security space as well. The industrial base will be strengthened and the market for space based services will grow as more and more customers demand the services.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

I encourage them to ensure that they are technically competent and business savvy. There are huge opportunities ahead of us!