

Simon P. Worden



Dr. Simon P. Worden (Brig. Gen., USAF, ret.) is the center director at NASA Ames Research Center where he leads a staff of nearly 2500 civil servants and contractors and oversees an annual budget of approx. \$800 million providing the critical R&D support that makes NASA's and the nation's aeronautics and space missions possible. In just three years, Worden has completely transformed Ames, reinvigorating the center's workforce and taking a leadership role in important, cost-effective small satellite missions. Worden has also put Ames on the critical path for all major NASA space exploration missions through effective use of the center's unique wind tunnels, arc jets, intelligent systems and supercomputer facilities and capabilities. Worden's 'GreenSpace' initiative has brought Ames remote sensing capabilities to bear on air traffic safety, fighting forest fires, and the study of climate change. And Ames' new Sustainability Base facility will serve as a model for future eco-friendly, high-performance federal buildings. Worden was named the Federal laboratory Consortium's Laboratory Director the Year for 2009.

Prior to becoming Ames' director, Worden was a Research Professor of Astronomy, Optical Sciences and Planetary Sciences at the University of Arizona where his primary research direction was the development of large space optics for national security and scientific purposes and near-earth asteroids. Additionally he worked on topics related to space exploration and solar-type activity in nearby stars. He is a recognized expert on space issues — both civil and military. He has authored or co-authored more than 150 scientific technical papers in astrophysics, space sciences, and strategic studies. Moreover, he served as a scientific co-investigator for two NASA space science missions.

In addition to his former position with the University of Arizona, Worden previously served as a consultant to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) on space-related issues. In 2004, he worked as a Congressional Fellow and chief advisor to the Chairman of the US Senate Subcommittee on Science and Space regarding NASA and space issues.

Worden retired in 2004 after 29 years of active service in the United States Air Force. His final position was Director of Development and Transformation, Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command, Los Angeles Air Force Base, CA.