

**Panel Biographies**  
*Maritime Workforce Development*



**Rear Admiral Jim Watson (USCG, ret.): Co-author, ZERO POINT FOUR: How U.S. Leadership in Maritime Will Secure America’s Future; Vice Chair, Marine Board, National Academies of Sciences**

James Watson is a retired Rear Admiral. He is currently an independent consultant providing business development services to maritime clients. He is also a co-author of Zero Point Four and a founding member of Maritime Accelerator for Resilience (MAR). He previously held the position of Senior Vice President of American Bureau of Shipping Global Government Services, where he was responsible for the government market sector across the four ABS divisions and technology. Before becoming Senior VP of Global Government Services, Watson was President and COO for the Americas Division where he was responsible for all operations of the American Bureau of Shipping in the Western Hemisphere.

Prior to joining ABS, Watson served as Director of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement at the US Department of Interior. In this role he provided regulatory oversight for energy exploration and production on the US Outer Continental Shelf. Before becoming BSEE Director, Watson’s flag assignments included US Coast Guard’s Director of Prevention Policy for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship, where his responsibilities included commercial vessel safety and security, ports and cargo safety and security and maritime investigations and was also designated as the Federal On-Scene Coordinator for the government-wide response to the Macondo incident in the Gulf of Mexico.

Watson earned a Bachelor’s of Science in Marine Engineering from USCGA in 1978. He received his Master of Science in Naval Architecture and his Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan in 1985. Watson earned an additional Master of Science in Strategic Studies at the National Defense University in 2001.

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