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Dr Margo McCarthy was appointed as the National Security Adviser on 3 February 2012. She succeeds Major General Duncan Lewis who has been appointed as Secretary of Defence.

The National Security Adviser is the principal source of advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on all policy matters relating to the security of the nation, and oversees the implementation of all national security policy. The National Security Adviser also provides a high level of leadership, direction and co-ordination to the national security community and, as an Associate Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, leads its National Security and International Policy Group.

Dr McCarthy had been Deputy National Security Adviser since March 2010. Prior to that, she had been Deputy Secretary Strategic Reform and Governance in the Department of Defence. Earlier, she had worked in a range of defence, intelligence and national security-related roles.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet