

Retirement Biography

Ms. Suzanne Hilding served as the Director of the Office of Projects, Planning, and Analysis at the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Suzanne retired on December 31, 2016.

Since mid- 2010, Ms. Hilding has been responsible for the oversight, development, acquisition, integration, installation, and acceptance of major system elements (spacecraft, instruments, launch services, and ground systems) for NESDIS' small satellite developments. In particular in this time under her leadership her organization delivered the DSCOVR and Jason 3 operational environmental satellite systems. In support of these activities, she managed requirements definition studies, conceptual and detailed engineering design and overall systems planning for both missions, which launched on February 2015 (DSCOVR) and January 2016 (Jason 3). Additionally, Ms. Hilding lead the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites (CGMS) Working Group III, focused on continuity of critical space based observations essential to global weather monitoring, forecasting, and climate monitoring missions. In this capacity, she coordinated the efforts across all of the international partners for planning and implementing key space based observations in order to secure global continuity of critical services.

Prior to her appointment at NOAA, Ms. Hilding served as the Chief Information Officer for the Department of Commerce (DOC), from March 2008 to mid-2010. In this capacity, she was responsible for managing DOC's Information Technology (IT) resources, across the 14 agencies in the Department.

Ms. Hilding worked for NASA for more than 22 years before joining the DOC. While at NASA, Hilding served on more than 65 launch campaigns. She began her work there in 1985, serving as an instrumentation engineer on a Life Support System project, transitioned into Space Shuttle systems engineering and served as the Lead Data Processing Systems engineer for the Space Shuttles Atlantis and Endeavor. In 1991, she was selected for the Section Chief of the Space Shuttle Main Engine Avionics Test and Checkout Team. She subsequently held numerous management positions and served in increasingly responsible roles including Division Chief for Space Shuttle Guidance, Digital, and Software Systems, Executive Director of the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, and Program Engineer for Space Shuttle Upgrades. From 2002-2005, Hilding was the Assistant Associate Administrator for Space Operations & Exploration Systems Integration in support of NASA's Deputy Administrator, serving as the principal advisor to the Deputy on agency operational and management issues.

Ms. Hilding was honored on September 27, 2016, at the U.S. Department of Commerce's Honor Awards for her contribution to the Deep Space Climate Observatory mission team, which received the Gold Medal for Leadership; her team successfully deployed NOAA's first operational satellite dedicated to space weather observations and predictions. On November 15, 2016, Ms. Hilding was honored at the NOAA Administrator's Award for her exemplary leadership and dedication to the successful completion and deployment of both the DSCOVR and Jason-3 satellites.

We appreciate Ms. Hilding's many years of service to the Nation, and wish her the best of luck in the future!