

Tom Shugart

Adjunct Senior Fellow with the Defense Program, Center for a New American Security



Tom Shugart is an Adjunct Senior Fellow with the Defense Program at the Center for a New American Security. His research focuses on undersea warfare and maritime competition, military innovation and acquisition, and the broader military balance in the Indo-Pacific.

Mr. Shugart served for over twenty-five years in the Navy, where he last worked in the Defense Department's Office of Net Assessment. He served as a submarine warfare officer during his military service, deploying multiple times to the Indo-Pacific region and commanding the nuclear-powered fast attack submarine USS Olympia (SSN 717) from 2013 to 2016. Following his submarine command tour, he served on the Navy Staff as the principal officer providing oversight of the Columbia Class SSBN Program, the Navy's highest-priority acquisition effort. Over the course of his military career, he served aboard both fast attack and ballistic missile submarines as well as at shore headquarters; he also served on the Joint Staff as the principal officer responsible for nuclear strike planning, advising of senior Defense Department leaders on nuclear weapons employment plans, and the training of Presidential military aides and command center personnel on nuclear command and control.

Mr. Shugart's writing has appeared in *War on the Rocks*, the *National Interest*, the U.S. Naval Institute's *Proceedings*, and the Lowy Institute's *Interpreter*. He has been quoted in publications including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Japan Times*, and *The Economist*. During a previous assignment to the Center for a New American Security as a Navy Fellow, in 2017 he published the highly influential study *First Strike: China's Missile Threat to U.S. Bases in Asia*, which has been cited in numerous U.S. and international think tank reports and studies.

Mr. Shugart is a graduate of the U.S. Naval War College, where he holds an M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies. During his time there, he served as a full-time member and Red Force commander of the Halsey Alfa Group, gaming near-future operational-tactical warfighting in East Asia. He is also a graduate in Mechanical Engineering of the University of Texas at Austin, and received postgraduate training in nuclear engineering from the U.S. Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. He is an instrument-rated Commercial Pilot and FAA-Certified Flight Instructor.

Mr. Shugart testified most recently at the Commission's 2021 hearing on "Deterring PRC Aggression Toward Taiwan."