Robert C. Johns was named Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center in September 2009. The Volpe Center is a unique, fee-for-service, federal resource for developing and facilitating innovations in the nation’s transportation system, with multidisciplinary expertise in all modes of transportation. The Center has about 570 federal employees, 420 on-site contractor employees, and 450 on-going projects, and annually obligates about $250 million.

Johns previously was Director of the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota from 2001 to 2009, after serving as deputy director and associate director. Before joining the University in 1988, he held research and management positions with the Santa Fe Railway, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities. He is active in the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies, currently chairing the TRB Technical Activities Council that oversees 200 technical committees. He earned a B.S. degree in Engineering Operations from Iowa State University and M.B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Iowa.