

Top Air Force Acquisition Official Discusses Vision for Next Century

WASHINGTON (AFP, Oct. 20, 1999) — The Air Force's Assistant Secretary for acquisition recently talked about future acquisition challenges and the steps the Service must take to smoothly transition into the 21st century.

"To meet the challenges of 21st century acquisition, Air Force acquisition must be tailored to meet a broad range of options," said Dr. Lawrence J. Delaney, who was sworn-in to the top Air Force acquisition post earlier this year. "The need for change is accentuated by the budget environment we live under today.

"The expeditionary aerospace force and our core competencies are the launch pad for our transitioning approach," he said. "The Air Force Board of Directors has put a lot of effort into articulating our mission and vision. Responsible stewardship is a key contribution across all core competencies. Now we must focus on the efforts needed to extend our position as the world's dominant aerospace power."

Delaney said successful transition would depend on three things: pioneering program management; acquisition reform; and a viable, focused science and technology [S&T] program.

"By pioneering program management, I mean that I will look to our program managers to be prudent risktakers, aggressive in implementing acquisition reform," he said. "AQ has been at the forefront of acquisition reform, setting the pace via the *Lightning Bolts* initiatives. We will continue to accelerate the trend to more business-like processes."

The *Lightning Bolts* represent a "jump-start" to implementing acquisition reform throughout the Air Force, with emphasis on streamlining organizations, developing relevant acquisition strategies, and encouraging the use of teaming as an acquisition workforce multiplier.

Delaney said the Air Force's current science and technology program was a "hot topic" during his confirmation process.

"Today's tight-budget environment forced the Air Force to make tough decisions," he noted.

"While we recognize and appreciate the impact of S&T on current warfighting capability, we must make the S&T investment today to ensure tomorrow's dominance. We must also look for innovative ways to demonstrate the value of today's S&T investments.

"We have some critical partners to assist us in attacking these challenges," he said. These partners include the warfighters, whom "we must work closely with ... to nail down requirements early on and remain focused on keeping the product affordable. Recent successes such as the evolved expendable launch vehicle program clearly illustrate the tremendous benefits of partnering with industry.

"And finally, we must be open and honest with Congress, keeping them informed on program matters," Delaney said.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.af.mil/news>.

