

Improving Defense Information System Acquisitions: Information Systems Summit

The Information Systems Summit will be held Jan. 22-23, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency Miami, in Miami, Fla. The theme of the 2009 event will be "Improving Defense Information System (IS) Acquisitions: Testing IS Capability in a Network Environment." For summit registration, go to <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information, contact Kelly Seymour, kseymour@ndia.org or 703-247-2583.

NDIA Biometrics Conference 2009

The National Defense Industrial Association will sponsor the 2009 NDIA Biometrics Conference Jan. 27-28, 2009, at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, Va. Register for the conference at <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information, contact Holley Slabaugh, meeting planner, hslabaugh@ndia.org or 703-247-2561.

2009 Tactical Wheeled Vehicles Conference

The 2009 Tactical Wheeled Vehicles (TWV) Conference will be held Feb. 2-4, 2009, at the Monterey Conference Center in Monterey, Calif. The theme of this year's event is "TWV: Rebuilding the Fleet: Reset, Repair, Re-buy." Register for the conference at <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information about the conference, contact the conference chairperson, Carol Orr, carol.orr@amgeneral.com or 703-875-3365.

2009 Munitions Executive Summit

The 2009 Munitions Executive Summit will be held Feb. 3-5, 2009, at the Ritz-Carlton New Orleans, in New Orleans, La. Register for the summit at <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information, contact Jennifer Hoechst, meeting planner, jhoechst@ndia.org or 703-247-2568.

Mastering Business Development Workshop

The Mastering Business Development (MBD) Workshop will be held Feb. 3-4, 2009, at the Westin Hotel in Huntsville, Ala. The MBD Workshop is a transforming experience that combines an intensive, interactive team-learning approach with the fundamentals of the core competencies required for sustained revenue generation. The curriculum enables participants to personally discover how intellectual, emotional, and behavioral change can have a significant impact on their personal and professional lives. Participants learn how to leverage the principles of behavioral psychology to identify real opportunities, qualify prospects, develop relationships, and create win-win situations for their companies, their cli-

ents, and themselves. Register for the workshop at <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information, contact Michelle Hariston, mhariston@ndia.org or 703-247-9478.

20th Annual SO/LIC Symposium & Exhibition

The 20th Annual SO/LIC (Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict) Symposium & Exhibition will be held Feb. 10-12, 2009, at the Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, D.C. The theme of this year's event, "The Persistent Conflict: The Path Ahead," will highlight the myriad challenges faced in a persistent conflict that includes future force structures, irregular warfare, regional engagement, coalition operations, global force posture, interagency coordination, weapon systems, and training requirements. Register for the symposium and exhibition at <<http://eweb.ndia.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?site=ndia&webcode=eventlist>>. For more information, contact Meredith Geary, associate director, mgeary@ndia.org or 703-247-9476.

1ST Annual Women in Defense Symposium

The 1st Annual Women in Defense Symposium will be held Feb. 18, 2009, at the Loews Hotel in Coronado, Calif. The theme of this inaugural event is "Leadership in a Changing World." This event will provide participants:

- Networking and professional development opportunities for women in national defense and security, and to support military servicemembers.
- Qualification for four Defense Acquisition University Continuous Learning Points (CLP) in accordance with the continuous learning policy set forth for the Department of Defense acquisition, technology and logistics workforce.
- Access to dynamic speakers—flag officers, senior executive service members, as well as executives from government, industry, academia.
- A variety of booths, including educational opportunities.

Registration will be posted soon at <<http://www.widsandiego.org>>. For more information or to get involved, contact Tricia Ward, vice president, San Diego Chapter WID, ward_patricia@bah.com or 619-981-1485.

25TH Annual Test & Evaluation National Conference

The 25th Annual Test & Evaluation National Conference will be held March 2-5, 2009, at the Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel in Atlantic City, N.J. This national conference is invaluable to those tasked with directing and executing system development programs for the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Energy, and other government departments tasked with various elements of our nation's security. Test planners,

modeling and simulation users and developers, range operators, program managers, military personnel charged with system acquisition responsibilities, industrial professionals, and others under contract with the government to provide support to our nation's defenses will also benefit. Please go to the NDIA Web site at <www.ndia.org/> to register for the conference. For more information, contact Emily Agnew, meeting planner, eagnew@ndia.org or 703-247-2566.

Warfighter's Vision 2009 Conference

Warfighter's Vision 2009, a forum sponsored by the Association for Enterprise Integration, will be held March 5-6, 2009, at the Ronald Reagan building in Washington, D.C. The theme of the 2009 event will be "Global Information Grid 2.0 and Cyber: Creating the Secure, Single Information Environment." The purpose of the Warfighter's Vision 2009 Conference is to give voice to the warfighter on information and communications capabilities necessary to assure mission performance in both joint and coalition environments. The conference provides:

- A forum for discussing topics of concern to Combatant Commands with industry and DoD officials.
- Input to DoD policy makers regarding needs and priorities.

Register for the conference at <www.afei.org/brochure/9a04/index.cfm>. For more information, contact Betsy Lauer, 703 247-9473.

2009 Joint Undersea Warfare Technology Spring Conference

The 2009 Joint Undersea Warfare Technology Spring Conference will be held March 9-12, 2009, at the Admiral Kidd Catering and Conference Center in San Diego, Calif. Please go to the NDIA Web site at <www.ndia.org/> to register for the conference. For more information, contact Kimberly Williams, meeting planner, kwilliams@ndia.org or 703-247-2578.

Precision Strike Annual Review

The Precision Strike Annual Review will be held March 10-11, 2009, at the Emerald Coast Conference Center in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. This annual review will present and clarify national defense policy and strategies to achieve the goals of precision engagement, afford the precision strike community the latest thoughts from Defense Committee Members of Congress, and highlight major precision strike achievements through presentation of the William J. Perry Award. Participants will also focus on the review and way forward of important precision strike weapons systems and capabilities essential to meet the joint warfighters' needs—particularly those weapons systems in development and procurement.

Register for the 2009 event at <www.precisionstrike.org/events.htm>.

AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS (SEPT. 16, 2008)

Acquisition Official Outlines Challenges Facing ISR Community

Chuck Paone

HANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass.—Command, control, computers, communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, collectively referred to as C4ISR, is a very large business, Martha "Marty" Evans told a government-industry crowd that assembled at Hanscom Sept. 11.

"When you look at the portfolio for C4ISR, it's only slightly smaller than the entire budget for the nation of Georgia, and it's a lot bigger than the entire [gross domestic product] of a lot of other small countries in the world," said Evans, who is the director for information dominance programs within the office of the assistant secretary of the Air Force for acquisition.



Martha "Marty" Evans, director for information dominance programs within the office of the assistant secretary of the Air Force for acquisition, speaks to a government-industry gathering at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., Sept. 11. Evans told the group that the Air Force is spending lots of money on C4ISR and is looking for big results. U.S. Air Force photo by Rick Berry

Her main point was that defense leaders aren't just talking about C4ISR, but are also putting a lot of money into it.

"We have the responsibility to spend that money wisely," she said, addressing a luncheon crowd at a forum sponsored by the Lexington-Concord Chapter of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association.

Speaking of the ISR surge called for by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Evans said that the Air Force currently has 60 percent of its unmanned aerial vehicles deployed to the area of responsibility. She also noted that while other Services have UAVs, only the Air Force turns its [UAVs] over to the joint force commander, since the Navy's assets are ship-bound and the Army operates its UAVs within its own battalions.

Regardless of how systems are operated, though, all U.S. forces have to work jointly, Evans said.

There's an insatiable demand in theater for full-motion video imagery produced by the Air Force's high-flying, loitering craft. But there is also great demand for other forms of ISR, she said, noting that the Air Force is buying 37 RC-12s.

"They want them quickly; they want them now, so we're going to have the first seven of them out there within four months."

Using these small aircraft to do ISR is a whole new mission for the Air Force, she said, adding that "It won't stop there.

"You know as well as I do that there will be a need for more and better sensors."

The Electronic Systems Center is uniquely positioned to help fill these and other needs, according to Evans, who spent more than 20 years of her own career managing ESC programs. She cited increased standardization between, and integration among, manned and unmanned platforms to enhance utility and efficiency as prime examples. Enhancements that better enable ISR assets to provide precise location and target identification data to shooters will also be very helpful.

"How do we do that? How are we going to continue to update that?" she asked. "Those are the things we're going to have to be looking at."

Evans also discussed the ongoing challenge of turning all available data into useful information, or what is often called actionable intelligence. Everyone involved in these efforts

needs to keep thinking about ways to enable better, faster, and easier processing of data.

"And it's not just the processing; it's the dissemination," she said. "We've got to get the data out to the people who need to make decisions, and that's all about how you develop the architectures, all about how you put the command and control together."

She noted on several occasions that, while so much discussion is focused on UAVs, existing platforms such as Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System and Airborne Warning and Control System "are in the fight right now." These systems, she said, will also be a big part of the future, and will continue to be upgraded to play increasingly important roles.

"Everyone has to remember that, when we're talking about ISR, it's not one piece that matters," Evans said. "It's all the pieces. It's making them all work together."

Paone writes for 66th Air Base Wing Public Affairs.

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (OCT. 3, 2008) **Mullen Stresses Leadership, Accountability in Business School Speech**

Jim Garamone

PHILADELPHIA—A year and a day after taking office as the nation's 17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen spoke about leadership to the students of the Wharton Business School Oct. 2.

Mullen spoke about what his 40 years in the U.S. military have taught him about leadership, telling the students he never intended to make the Navy a career, but got around great people who helped to open his eyes.

The chairman stressed accountability to the packed auditorium. The admiral said he was seven weeks into a 10-week course on leadership at Harvard University in 1991 before anyone even mentioned accountability.

"I didn't understand that," he said, "because leadership ... is about understanding accountability—being held accountable and at the same time holding yourself accountable."

Mullen told the students that his arrival at the U.S. Naval Academy in 1964 was an eye-opener.

"I was 17 years old and had been out of [California] once in my life," Mullen said. Meeting and working with midship-

men from around the country was a learning experience, he said.

Being in the military offered him the opportunity to see the world, the admiral said, but most importantly, it offered the opportunity to lead.

"It gave me an awful lot of responsibility when I was very young," Mullen said. "And the Navy kept feeding me these positions my entire life."

In the military, Mullen told the students, command is the lodestone for leaders. "It's the pinnacle," he said, adding that accountability is fundamental to the joy and challenge of command because commanders find themselves having to put together teams to accomplish the missions they are assigned.

Command is built around trust—both up and down—and hinges on choosing the right people, Mullen said. The hardest job he has had in his 40 years in the military has been selecting personnel for the various missions, he told the audience.

Few people succeed by just "winging it," the chairman said. He urged the young men and women to have a strategic plan and follow it. Leaders without a strategy or a plan are the ones who fail, he said.

Mullen urged the students not to fear failure. "I learned more from when I failed than when I succeeded," he said, "but I wouldn't recommend failing as much as you can so you can learn."

If failure occurs, people should get up, dust off, and get moving again, Mullen said. "Then it becomes, 'Do you have the depth, do you have the reputation, do you have the mentorship to succeed?'" he said.

Mullen told of two of his own failures, one as a young officer and one when he was a bit more senior. He expressed his gratitude for mentors who didn't give up on him then, and gave him the chance to continue, rather than firing him. "I learned a great deal from that experience alone," he said.

Leaders have to change and grow, the chairman said. "If you're not growing, you're dead," he said. "The questions become, 'How do you stimulate growth, and how do you reach for the right kind of growth?'"

The chairman—the highest-ranking officer in the U.S. military—said he continues to grow. He continues to learn about

the other Services, he said—especially the Army, which he calls the center of gravity for the U.S. military. He tries to learn best practices from private businesses and from subject-matter experts in such critical areas as cyber-defense, he told the audience.

The speed of today's world complicates leadership, Mullen said, as new technologies exchange information at the speed of light. "How do we keep up to the speed of light?" he asked. "We better be able to, especially because being No. 2 in the business I'm in is not a great outcome."

Leaders will succeed only if they are willing to work hard, and are willing to adapt, the chairman said.

Information is crucial to military and business success, Mullen said, but he noted that the more senior a leader becomes, the more removed he or she is from what's really going on.

A leader "has to have people that will tell you the truth," he said.

Finally, Mullen said, empathy is important for leaders. He said he finds it helpful to look at problems in areas such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq through the eyes of the people who live there. He visits the areas, speaks to the leaders, and listens to them. "My growth in this job is tied to that," he said.

Integrity and duty are not just words, the chairman said, and accountability is not an abstract concept.

"You will have to walk the walk," he said. "You are what we will become in the future."

Garamone writes for American Forces Press Service.

AIR FORCE NEWS SERVICE (OCT. 7, 2008)

Air Force Senior Leaders Take Up Key Decisions

WASHINGTON—The nuclear enterprise, cyber organization, end strength, force shaping, and command and control of Air Force operations were just some of the topics discussed when Air Force senior leaders met at CORONA on Oct. 1-3 at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley set the tone stating, "Over the past two days we addressed several issues, making decisions on key Air Force missions necessary to move our Air Force in the right direction."

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz followed with comments on the importance of the conference saying,

"CORONA is a forum for decision. The teamwork manifested in this room will allow us to accomplish what our Air Force needs done."

As a follow-up to the recent nuclear summit, the briefings and decisions at CORONA were dominated by discussions on the nuclear enterprise. Discussions included options to reconfigure the command structure for nuclear forces, roles and responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapons Center, the required skills and force development for personnel conducting the nuclear mission, and stand-up of the new nuclear-focused staff element organization within Air Force headquarters.

The leadership also decided to establish a nuclear-focused major command to concentrate Air Force support for the nuclear and deterrence missions.

"We will announce decisions soon because they are crucial steps toward attaining excellence in our nuclear enterprise and revitalization of the nuclear culture across the Air Force," said Donley.

Initial planning will be integrated into the Air Force Nuclear Roadmap, which will be unveiled in a few weeks.

In addition, the senior leaders discussed the Air Force active duty end strength ceiling, now to be 330,000 personnel, and addressed which missions and functional specialties should obtain additional allocations based on emerging missions as well as critically manned career fields.

"Force shaping across the Air Force is hard work. There are many factors that need to be considered as we determine where manpower billets will be placed ... everything from new missions that are directly contributing every day to joint operations to shortfalls in specific functional areas," said Schwartz. "The leadership will work to close this issue for this budget cycle in the coming weeks."

A key component of the Air Force's contribution to the current war on terrorism is the execution of command and control of air assets supporting theater operations. Leaders initiated discussions on how the Service can better fulfill the responsibilities to organize, train, and equip command and control capabilities for the joint force commander, as well as how the Air Force can best identify and overcome potential shortfalls in our capabilities.

"How we prioritize and utilize our command and control capabilities in support of joint force operations are key to the overall success of every mission," said Schwartz.

Also discussed was how the Air Force can improve support to joint force commanders. One decision made is to assign a senior Air Force officer to appropriate JFCs with command authority to direct air support. The leadership also decided to strengthen air-to-ground integration by increasing the number and training of the airmen supporting tactical air control systems and accepting offers from other Services to integrate their personnel into our command and control units.

Leadership also decided to establish a Numbered Air Force for cyber operations within Air Force Space Command and discussed how the Air Force will continue to develop capabilities in this new domain and train personnel to execute this new mission.

"The conduct of cyber operations is a complex issue, as DoD and other interagency partners have substantial equity in the cyber arena," said Donley. "We will continue to do our part to increase Air Force cyber capabilities and institutionalize our cyber mission."

Locations for the new nuclear command and cyber NAF were not addressed and require further deliberation. Other key AF issues discussed include an update on the status of joint basing initiatives, the development of a common Logistics Standardization Evaluation Program, and review of the concept of integrating the networks used to repair the Air Force's weapon systems.

"We came together to discuss key issues, chart a way ahead, and move forward with sound decisions," said Schwartz. "Our goal is a more stable Air Force, focused on our core missions, as a key member of the joint team."

"What airmen do every day across the Air Force is not easy work. What our leadership team did over the last couple days at CORONA was not easy work," said Donley. "But we all know how to rise to the challenge, and the Air Force is better because of everyone's efforts at making key decisions."

AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND NEWS RELEASE
(OCT. 9, 2008)

AFMC Commander Looks to Future

Air Force Staff Sgt. LuCelia Ball

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.—The top officer in Air Force Materiel Command visited Eglin AFB Oct. 8 to speak at the 34th National Defense Industrial Association Symposium.

While visiting, Gen. Bruce Carlson took time to reflect on Team Eglin's contributions to the Global War on Terror.

"Team Eglin is a critical part of the Global War on Terror," he said. "Not just weapons or weapons that are part of normal programs, but weapons that have been very rapidly developed, rapidly fielded, and then modified very quickly. As you know, we've modified several of the Small Diameter Bombs so they've become highly effective, low collateral damage weapons."

Another critical part of the mission, he said, are the people that make up Team Eglin.

"It's not just the weapons, it's the people that we send to the area of responsibility who are critical," he said. "I recently spent some time in the AOR [area of responsibility]. While there, I visited six different bases and met with a number of Eglin people who are deployed.

"Team Eglin people run the hospital at Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, for 179 days at a time," Carlson said. "These airmen are very busy people who provide critical care and stabilize patients

for transport. I also met with explosive ordnance disposal units, civil engineers, and transportation specialists. They work in a very high operations tempo environment and do some great things for the fight."

The general also commented on how Team Eglin will support future requirements as the Air Force continues to prepare for tomorrow through the development and delivery of advanced weapons systems.

"The great thing about Team Eglin is that, in a phrase, you have it all in one spot," he said. "Team Eglin not only has the laboratories here that provide the feeder technology for what we do in this business, but it also houses the AFRL [Air Force Research Laboratory] munitions directorate, the Air Armament Center, and its three wings—all of those entities work together synergistically to provide quick-reaction capability to the joint force.

"There are a lot of customers who come here and find that Eglin, its facilities, and the highly trained people here to be absolutely critical to what they are doing in the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and the Department of Energy because of the unique capabilities here," Carlson added.

Ball writes for 96th Air Base Wing Public Affairs.

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (OCT. 9, 2008)

Myth Busted: Scientists Unveil High-Tech Army

Jacqueline M. Hames

WASHINGTON—Advancements in science and technology that support full-spectrum operations, like exoskeletons, were discussed at the annual meeting and exposition of the Association of the United States Army.

The forum "Busting the Low-Tech Myth: Army S&T Support to Full Spectrum Operations" provided presentations on how experimental and applied technologies show the Army has advanced across the board, from recruiting to technology in theater.

Lt. Gen. Ross Thompson, military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, opened the panel with a report on how to grow the AT&L workforce in order to aid research and development.

"We're going to be 'in-sourcing' more things than we've been outsourcing lately," Thompson said.

Other presenters went on to discuss the importance of recruiting future generations to research and operate tech-



Gen. Bruce Carlson, commander of Air Force Materiel Command, visits the base operations flight at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., before continuing on to brief attendees at the 34th National Defense Industrial Association Symposium.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian Jones

nologies, and how technology itself plays an important part in the recruiting; how technology helps facilitate the ability to track business; the significance of internal research and external commercial partnerships; and the technological advancements themselves, both in the experimental and applied phases.

Nanoflyers and Exoskeletons

"Advancement in computers and our computational capabilities is enormous," said Dr. Thomas Killion, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for research and technology and its chief scientist. The LandWarrior system, the technology in the back of a Stryker vehicle, allows the Army to do things it would have never been capable of before, he explained.

Current technologies in the field include precision munitions, unmanned vehicles from Future Combat Systems, and hybrid electric power sources, Killion said. But these applied technologies are not the only things that make the Army high-tech; experimental systems and advanced research also make the Army more developed.

The Army has invested heavily in nanotechnology and biotechnology, Killion said. "Nanotechnology in terms of designing new materials from the ground up, atom by atom, to provide new properties" in terms of protection, sensing, and monitoring the condition of the soldier.

"Biotechnology, in terms of really mimicking biology to come up with new ideas for protection, sensing, communications, for doing things in ways that billions of years of evolution have helped living things to do things, and exploiting that knowledge to design man-made systems," he said.

The Army is developing training avatars—computer-generated simulations that will react to and interact with soldiers intelligently, as well as researching sensors that monitor brain functions, which could lead to enhanced prosthesis control, Killion said.

During his presentation, Killion ran two videos of technologies still being experimented with: exoskeletons and nanoflyers.

The exoskeleton is a robotic device the soldier wears like a full body suit. It would enhance soldier performance, increasing strength without losing agility, and potentially developing into an entirely covered system—a little like the protective suit worn in the recent film "Ironman."

Nanoflyers, Killion explained, weigh about as much as a penny and resemble tiny helicopters, able to fit into a back-

pack easily. They will serve as urban-interior surveillance technology, and can either hover inside buildings or be placed inconspicuously on a shelf for stationary monitoring.

Killion emphasized that in order to continue technological advancements, the Army must foster science and engineering career paths.

"Tomorrow's technology is in the minds of today's youth," he said.

Recruiting for the Future

Part of developing and maintaining a high-tech Army is having the manpower to research, develop, and operate the business and technologies—which means recruitment, Thompson said.

Thompson explained how the AT&L is expanding its workforce, both on the civilian side and the military side. Currently, there are roughly 38,500 civilians in the workforce and he projects doubling that amount through 2012. On the military side, there are less than 16,000 people, but that's expected to increase by 178 in the contract area, and 149 other military.

"All those acquisition career fields require highly trained people; it's not just the PhD scientists—it's the business school graduates that understand basic economics and finance and can help us put together a good contract instrument," he said.

Ed Walters, chief marketing officer for the Army, spoke about the new Army Experience Center, a recruiting center in Philadelphia that uses advanced technology and marketing theories.

Based on the concept of experiential marketing, the Army Experience Center provides a relaxed environment for recruiters to interact with young people and their parents, Walters said.

The center is futuristic in appearance, complete with a command center where visitors can be briefed virtually by actual soldiers. State-of-the-art gaming stations, touch screen monitors, and realistic battle simulators all help reinforce the idea that the Army is high-tech, and help to connect with the potential recruits who grew up in a technology-oriented environment, he explained.

"The mission is to apply alternative business practices to recruiting," Walters said, and to create innovative programs to enhance the understanding of the Army.

Researching the Future

The director of the Tank and Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center, Dr. Grace Bochenek, said that the Army is researching several types of alternative energy: biodiesel, hydrogen fuel, and hydroelectric power sources. These would help run autonomous vehicles and provide clean, efficient power for the soldier of the future.

In fact, hybrid electric power has already been put to use as a power source for the FCS Non-Line of Sight Cannon.

The Army is also working with various representatives from the commercial automotive industry, like GM and Toyota, to research vehicle safety, Bochenek said.

Jeff Parsons of the Army Contracting Command spoke about how new software enables training and experience to be tracked, helping to build a "virtual contracting enterprise" and create better contracting officers.

"[Our job] is to recruit you to help us get the story out," Kilion said, asking the audience to spread the word: "That the Army is a high-tech Service, that we provide soldiers with technology that enables them to more effectively do their jobs, and do it safely."

AIR FORCE NEWS SERVICE (OCT. 14, 2008)

Chief of Staff Emphasizes Logisticians' Role

John Scaggs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—You don't have to sell Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz on the value of logistics.

"Acquisition, engineering, and wholesale logistics form the foundation of numerous Air Force capabilities ... Logistics professionals who perform these services are critical to everything the Air Force does and to its success."

The chief of staff made those remarks Oct. 13 while speaking to about 1,200 attendees from logistics career fields during the first day of the Logistics Officer Association conference in Columbus, Ohio.

The Logistics Officer Association is an organization that strives to enhance the military logistics profession. The conference provides an open forum to promote quality logistical support and logistics officer professional development.

Schwartz praised logisticians for their efforts to keep Air Force weapon systems ready well beyond their intended, designed service life.

"Our systems continue to perform miraculously because of what logisticians do," Schwartz said.

He relayed two stories recently told to him by Army personnel. In one, an improvised explosive device stranded a group of 18 soldiers. One of the surviving soldiers said the enemy, numbering about 60, attacked the soldiers and killed five.

"He told me that when things looked bleak, there was a huge explosion not more than 100 meters from [the] U.S. soldiers' location," Schwartz said. "The Air Force delivered a close strike that neutralized the enemy.

"When I think about that story, I'm reminded how years of sustainment effort came together that day to save American lives and make that mission a success," the general added.

He also shared that an Army general with the 101st Airborne Division told Schwartz that the infantry's best friend is an Air Force pilot.

"How does this tie in to the logistics community?" Schwartz asked those in the audience. "Air Force pilots are there for ground troops because 'loggies' are always there.

"From 'loggies' who are on the ramp in hot zones, to those supporting efforts in theater, to 'loggies' delivering munitions, to those working acquisition and sustainment at our depots ... our aircraft would not have their capability, reliability, and precision without the logistics community," he said.

Schwartz challenged attendees to take advantage of the opportunities the LOA conference provides.

"There is no substitute for experience and leadership," the general said. "LOA is a critical component in educating Air Force logisticians. Network and build relationships while you're here.

"Remember that 'support' is not a dirty word," Schwartz said. "Deliver what you promise. Making others successful is significant and worthy."

Scaggs writes for Air Force Materiel Command Public Affairs.