DTIC Newly Established as DoD Field Activity

In order to improve and accelerate technology transfer to the nation's warfighters, DTIC was recently established as a DoD field activity and transferred to the Director, Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E).

The formal transfer occurred on June 4, 2004, when Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz signed a Decision Memorandum announcing his determination to establish DTIC as a DoD field activity under the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. DTIC will now report directly to Ronald Sega, Ph.D., Director, DDR&E.

The signing of the memorandum formally ended DTIC's affiliation with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), of which DTIC had been a part since January 1998.

During a meeting with DTIC personnel on July 7, Sega said, "Technology is vital to DoD's transformation. Efficient and dynamic information is key to technology development and transition and DTIC is vital to DDR&E and DoD." DTIC Administrator Kurt Molholm added that, "All DTIC staff look forward to being a part of DDR&E and working toward its primary goal of ensuring that technology performers are closely aligned with scientific, research and engineering information providers."

The mission of DDR&E is "to ensure that warfighters today and tomorrow have superior and affordable technology to support their missions, and to give them revolutionary war winning capabilities." On August 3, Alan Shaffer, Director, Plans and Programs, DDR&E, conducted a follow-on briefing to further explain the DDR&E organization and DTIC's new role as a field activity. The priorities of DDR&E, he said, are to:

- integrate DoD science and technology and focus on "transformation,"
- enhance technology transition,
- address the national security science and engineering workforce,
- expand outreach to combatant commands and the intelligence community, and
- accelerate support to the war on terrorism.

And how does DTIC fit into the overall picture within DDR&E? "You will be the information repository and resource that will allow us to get things developed in laboratories and out to the field quickly," he said. "You have the best capability in the world to get focused DoD technology to DoD people. You are a perfect mission fit with DDR&E."

Interview

Kurt Molholm

DTIC Administrator Kurt Molholm recently announced his intention to retire before the end of the current year.

During his 20-year tenure as Administrator, he has been very active in the scientific and technical information community and has received numerous professional awards and honors. Among these are President of the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services (NFAIS); Chair of CENDI, an interagency group of scientific and technical information senior managers; and President of the International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI). He is also the 2003 Miles Conrad Lecturer, an NFAIS award that honors leaders, innovators and opinion makers in the information provider community.

Recently he sat down for a brief interview with Val Hogue, Digest editor, to reflect on his career, accomplishments and the future of DTIC.

Q: You've been DTIC's Administrator since February 1985. How has the organization changed since then?

KM: Several things come to mind. When I attended my first DTIC Annual Users Meeting and Training Conference, a question and answer session from our customers took up the entire morning. Now we seldom have any questions. Perhaps that's due to better communication. I also think we've had a great attitudinal change in terms of how we work with and interact with our customers and patrons.

I believe we've experienced a tremendous cultural change. The so-called digital revolution has had substantial impact on us and I think we're a lot more computer literate. Lots of DTIC people are comfortable with automation, which includes working with the Internet.

Q: As Administrator, you have certainly had your share of professional accomplishments. Which ones are you most proud of?

KM: I'm most proud of being Administrator of DTIC. That certainly wasn't my career goal in the beginning.

I was involved with DTIC for a long time when I was with the Defense Logistics Agency, mainly buying computer equipment. So when I came over here it was a whole new environment. The whole area of content management is important - a lot more so than technology is. Thinking about things in that way and getting other people to think that way, particularly outside of the information community, is an accomplishment. Information technology is a very important tool but it's not DTIC's "raison d'être." DTIC's purpose, as well as other information management organizations' purpose, is to aid in the delivery of knowledge to those who use it to further advance knowledge.

I'm also thinking about the honors I've received as Administrator. I think one of the big honors was to be named the NFAIS Miles Conrad Lecturer a couple of years ago. Another was being made an honorary member of ICSTI, whose bylaws limit membership to 10 people. I've just been notified that I've been elected Honorary Fellow for NFAIS so that's a big honor. I know my father was really impressed a number of years ago when my biography appeared in "Who's Who in the United States." But then, a lot of people achieve that distinction.

Q: Were there any times during your tenure that you were particularly disappointed in the end result of any of your professional initiatives? If so, can you elaborate?

KM: I've had a few minor disappointments. I'm a little disappointed I haven't been able to guide DTIC's marketing effort strongly enough outside its traditional scientific and technical information community. There are still many people out there who have never heard of us and who should have heard of us.

Q: What has been the most rewarding aspect of your job?

KM: Seeing the organization grow and mature, and being accepted by our customer base. We have achieved some pretty high satisfaction ratings according to our PROCAP (Proactive Customer Advocate Program) customer surveys. The most rewarding thing is being part of this community. It's a very important community and people don't realize that content is a way of competing. It's also rewarding to see new technologies being implemented.

Q: How do you view DTIC's recent move back to DDR&E? What, in your opinion, are the advantages?

KM: DTIC just became a DoD field activity. This is a tremendous thing in that DTIC will no longer be held back by parent organizations that have very little knowledge of what we do. When DDR&E Director Dr. Ronald Sega was here I was fortunate to present four awards to our senior directors. Now, the Deputy Administrator and all of the directors have received a DISA meritorious or exceptional service award. These are reflective of the great work of the entire DTIC team and I certainly appreciate all the things our people have done. So I think that's a positive thing.

Paul Ryan and I prepared all of these awards. None resulted from a unilateral action from DISA management. Obviously, I didn't do a good job in "selling" DTIC's value to them.

Q: How do you view DTIC's future?

KM: I see positive things now that DTIC is within a community that recognizes value. The world is becoming very, very complex and DTIC people are in a unique position to recognize that. Up until the establishment of the Dewey Decimal System in the late 19th century, we really didn't have a way of categorizing information outside of physical assets such as a library. It took nearly 5,000 years to be able to organize the mass of human knowledge in some

way so that people could find it. That's a tremendous challenge now in a digital world. DTIC probably has one of the only systems, along with a registration process, that allows granularity - permitting information to be selectively released. We also have knowledge of how to organize content. We are part of a relatively small, but vastly important, network of information scientists in the DoD. We also have a willingness to change and innovate.

I see DTIC's future as not only bright in regards to scientific and technical information but I see it expanding its areas of interest and getting more and more advanced in not only managing content but analyzing its content. Information analysis, as shown by our very active and successful Information Analysis Center program, is one of the important directions to be taken in the future. With more and more content available through such things as the Internet the problem of overload continues to grow. Thus providing focused information to users is critical. All these things are really content oriented as opposed to technology oriented. So I see a tremendously promising future.

Q: Looking back on all you've experienced in your federal career, what lessons have you learned that best prepared you for life's other challenges?

KM: Throughout my career I've been an analyst of some type. Certainly that helps to see all sides of an issue with some amount of dispassionate observation. As I mature I find patience is important because the world is complex and there are lots of different sides and views. I don't think you should rush to make a decision until a decision is needed, and then you make one. I'm concerned about, for example, the politics of the day. Great divisions and no sense of willingness to compromise in-between.

Q: Upon retirement, do you have any plans to work in the private sector? Do you plan to stay in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area? Do you have any personal interests and/or hobbies that you would like to share with us?

KM: No, I have no plans to work in the private sector at this time. I do, however, plan to stay in the Washington metropolitan area. My wife and I are thinking about moving to Arlington, close to the Metro station. We plan to visit museums and go to the theater. We also like movies and are big sports fans. I

also plan to do a lot of reading and traveling, with my wife, for pleasure. This means spending time doing things I never got to do when I was on a business trip. Believe me, traveling to a distant city and spending most of your time in a meeting room or an auditorium and then returning to your hotel is not as glamorous as everyone imagines.

Q: Do you have any parting remarks you'd like to share with DTIC personnel and our user community?

KM: I'd like to thank everyone for accepting me as a part of your community. It's been a wonderful 20 years. I've made a lot of national and international friends, both in and out of government. I've been fortunate to be Chairman of CENDI several times. I was President of both NFAIS and ICSTI. I've received many honors and I'm grateful for the whole thing.

Q: Thank you very much, Mr. Molholm.

KM: Thank you.

Virtual Reference Service Comes to DTIC

To better serve the reference needs of the DoD community, DTIC recently adopted QuestionPoint, a digital, collaborative Web-based reference service jointly developed by the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) and the U.S. Library of Congress.

QuestionPoint allows libraries and information centers to expand reference services with shared resources and subject specialists around the world. Questions submitted via this service may be referred for response to the Global Reference Network, a worldwide group of libraries and institutions committed to digital reference, or to the Defense Digital Library Research Service, a 24/7 electronic reference for Department of Defense libraries. A DTIC staff specialist will determine how to best answer questions.

Visit *www.dtic.mil/dtic/forms/questionPoint.html* and complete the form to submit your query. Contact *ref@dtic.mil* or call (703) 767-8274/DSN 427-8274 for additional information.

Upcoming Meetings

American Association of School Librarians
October 5-9, 2004
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Internet Librarian International 2004
October 10-12, 2004
London, UK

National Fall SBIR/STTR Conference
November 1-4, 2004
Boise, Idaho

Internet Librarian
November 15-17, 2004
Monterey, Ca.

Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC)
December 6-9, 2004
Orlando, Fla.

Military Librarians Workshop
December 6-10, 2004
Columbia, S.C.

Computers in Libraries
March 16-18, 2005
Washington, D.C.

Third IEEE International Information Assurance Workshop
March 31 – April 1, 2005
Washington, D.C.

DTIC 2005 Annual Users Meeting and Training Conference
April 4-6, 2005
Alexandria, Va.

TechNet International 2005
May 17-19, 2005
Washington, D.C.

Special Libraries Association
June 5-8, 2005
Toronto, Ontario, Canada