



Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA)

by Kent Schneider, President and CEO, AFCEA International, Washington

We are in a world at change. Nowhere is the change more apparent than in the global security community. In the past three decades, we have seen a shift from the Cold War to a much less stable world of local and region conflicts, asymmetric warfare, terrorism applied globally, and rapidly shifting alliances. NATO has grown dramatically and is fully engaged in Afghanistan. Military and security force structures have been changed to meet the threat environment we face today and weaponry is being adjusted as budgets allow. All of this is occurring as budgets tighten during a period of economic challenge.

Foundation in 1964

AFCEA International (The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association), established in 1946, is a non-profit membership association serving the military, government, industry, and academia as an ethical forum for productive dialogue in the fields of communications, information technology, intelligence, and global security. In addition, AFCEA promotes the advancement of technical education in support of the global security community through professional development training and a program of scholarships and grants, applying approximately two million dollars per year globally.

Worldwide organization

AFCEA is a chapter-based organization with 146 chapters and sub-chapters worldwide. We have approximately 33,000 individual members and over 1800 corporate member companies. We support the spectrum of the global security community, including defence, intelligence, and homeland or internal security/counter-terrorism. Our focus extends from the international alliance or coalition level, to the national level, to local first responders (police, fire, emergency services).

Partnership provider

Given the pace of change, the ongoing operational tempo, and the limited budgets available to



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AFCEA President and Chief Executive Officer Mr. Schneider earned a bachelor's degree in business management from Augusta College, and a master's in information systems management from the University of Southern California. He is also a graduate of the National War College.

He is a 26-year veteran of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. After retiring from the Army in 1994, Mr. Schneider joined Litton PRC and comes to AFCEA

from Northrop Grumman Corporation's Information Technology sector, where he served among others as president of the Defense Group, as president of Northrop Grumman Information Technology Global and as president of the Defense Systems division. Mr. Schneider brings to AFCEA the wealth of experience he gained while working for the Army in the early years of information technology, and his experience in industries. He was named "AFCEAN of the Year" in 2004.

achieve both, the need for AFCEA to promote partnership among government, industry and academia is greater than ever. We can achieve this dialogue through scheduled events (AFCEA conducts approximately 160 events per year globally), through tailored workshops to produce government-specified deliverables (white papers, draft policy documents, etc), or through round-table discussions. There is no better environment to bring together government, industry and academic perspectives in an ethical forum. This can only work where a substantial relationship exists between our AFCEA chapters and the appropriate government authorities. Coordination is needed to ensure proper focus, format and deliverables.

The role of AFCEA-Europe

AFCEA Europe consists of 37 chapters and sub-chapters and approximately 20 percent of our individual members. Our focus in Europe is clearly NATO and the European Union, but, in the past decade, national programs for homeland/internal security have gained importance. Like every-



Kent Schneider, President and CEO of AFCEA International, hands over an AFCEA Award to MajGen (ret) Klaus-Peter Treche, President of the AFCEA Bonn Chapter

where globally, Europe is undergoing change in defence and security. Let's examine some of these trends.

Budget numbers for NATO as a coalition and for each member nation are declining. Diversion of resources to Afghanistan is further constraining these budgets.

NATO is undergoing a strategic review to determine the way ahead and to decide whether the current threat demands realignment of forces, priorities, and/or missions. Considerations include asymmetric versus full spectrum capability, whether to eliminate the boundary between strategic and tactical information sharing, level of focus on cyber warfare, and whether there is a need for redefinition of coalition relationships.

The current range of missions in asymmetric warfare and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief are putting unprecedented emphasis on the enterprise viewpoint.

- Organisations at every level are moving as quickly as budgets allow to an enterprise posture.
- Cloud or, at least, shared computing will happen broadly.
- Federation of networks and systems is occurring and will accelerate in NATO.
- Security will be the driving factor.
- Identity and attribute services that extend across NATO are key.
- Cyber defense realignment will force consolidation at every level.

Budgets are suffering

Research and development budgets are suffering more than most in the current environment. Much of the research burden will fall to industry.

There will be fewer new programs begun as a greater share of the budget goes to sustaining current programs and paying personnel costs.

More emphasis in NATO will go to national shares and to inclusion of small businesses in contracting and procurement. Responsiveness in acquisition will continue to get attention, particularly for expeditionary forces. Emphasis will continue on speed of service to the war fighter.

AFCEA is looking ahead

Given these trends, what can AFCEA do to help? First, by bringing industry together with government, we can help lay out a feasible roadmap for change that addresses direction, pace, resources needed, and solutions available that can mitigate risk.

Second, we can help with strategic planning. Planning cannot be done effectively without understanding available capability. No one understands potential solutions like industry. To the extent we can bring together those in industry who understand capability with those in government that command the requirements, we have advanced understanding for both government and industry, and promoted a better outcome.