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Top Stories

DoD Meets with Australia's Defense Science Technology Organization

Defense agencies exchange ideas at ACA meeting

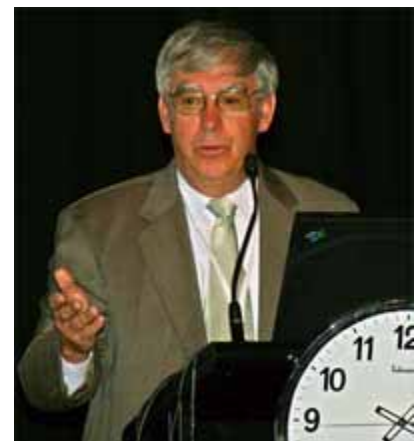
By Cynthia Greenwood

Since corrosion knows no international boundaries, the DoD community has begun working more closely with other countries who share the struggle to preserve military assets. "Corrosion is insidious, and our allies have the same problems we do in terms of corrosion," said Daniel J. Dunmire, leader of the DoD Corrosion Policy and Oversight Office.

"Over the next few years we want to exchange ideas and results of joint Service corrosion projects and activities so others can learn from them," Dunmire said. "Through face-to-face meetings with Australia, Canada, the U.K., France, Germany, and others, our goal is to share information as our different project results become known."

In the United States alone, industry and government spent \$276 billion on corrosion's direct costs in 2002, according to estimates from a U.S. Federal Highway Administration study.

In the spirit of international cooperation, representatives from the DoD Corrosion Office and the DoD Corrosion Prevention Integrated Product Team (CPCIPT) met with members of Australia's Defense Science Technology Organization (DSTO) last November. The meeting kicked off a week-long Australasian Corrosion Association (ACA) conference in Hobart, Tasmania.



David Erickson, a senior analyst in the DoD Corrosion Office, presented the keynote speech at the 2006 Australasian Corrosion Association conference in Hobart, Tasmania.

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As part of Australia's Department of Defense, DSTO leads government efforts to apply science and technology to protect military assets. On November 17, DSTO officials spoke to U.S. DoD officials about their military corrosion program. During the meeting, David Erickson, a senior analyst in the DoD Corrosion Office, briefed DSTO members about broad-based American efforts to address military corrosion. Erickson reviewed several topics, including the law

that directs DoD to develop a long-term corrosion strategy; DoD's response to this legislative mandate; the organizational structure DoD has put in place to fight corrosion; its approach to a number of bureaucratic obstacles; its success at spearheading joint Service activities; and a variety of lessons learned.

After Erickson's briefing both groups talked about how Australia could build a corrosion program without a legislative mandate, and how they could partner with DoD's corrosion community. The two agencies also discussed allowing DSTO to use the DoD Corrosion Exchange Web site to enhance cooperation within the Australian corrosion community and

allow it to keep abreast of DoD's CPCIPT activities, said Rich Hays, a senior corrosion engineer at the Naval Surface Warfare Center and leader of the CPCIPT's communication and outreach efforts.

On November 21, Erickson also presented the keynote speech to ACA conference attendees, discussing ways in which DoD has created a public policy on corrosion prevention. He addressed ways of developing a public policy initiative, DoD's current corrosion prevention and control program, and how strategic partnerships involving professional associations like ACA and NACE might lend support to military corrosion efforts.

"From a NACE point of view we were interested to learn that both the DSTO and the DoD Corrosion Office face similar challenges as they develop their military corrosion programs," said Cliff Johnson, NACE director of public affairs. Johnson recalled that DSTO officials were particularly interested in the legislative mandate that supports joint Service efforts to share best practices in preserving military assets.

Since the conference NACE and ACA have begun thinking about how they can work with Australia's DSTO to support their efforts, Johnson said. "In the near-term, both associations will ascertain whether there is a need to help Australia develop support for their corrosion program at the parliamentary level. As we work with our allies, we have discovered a host of common problems on military equipment that we all use," he said.

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NACE is also considering the merits of spearheading a partnership with Australia's DSTO, ACA, and DoD to create a certification program for corrosion prevention work on aircraft equipment," Johnson said. "As the Office of Corrosion Policy and Oversight continues to establish itself and provide benefits to the war fighter, it gives us an opportunity to begin expanding this effort beyond the U.S. to allied nations around the globe who are facing the same challenges."

To further its goals of international cooperation in corrosion prevention, representatives from the CPCIPT will meet with DSTO again during the 2007 ACA conference. The DoD Corrosion Office is also making arrangements this year to discuss corrosion prevention initiatives with defense ministries in Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany.