

Department of Defense Bloggers Roundtable Via Teleconference With Brandon Underwood, Member of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center (CERDEC) Space and Terrestrial Communications Directorate (S&TCD) Airborne Antennas and Integration Team, and Charles V. Maraldo, Director of CERDEC Flight Activity Subject: CERDEC -- Optimized Antenna Solutions Time: 11:03 a.m. EDT Date: Wednesday, April 4, 2012

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BRADLEY CANTOR (Office of the Secretary of Defense Public Affairs): Hello. I'd like to welcome you all to the Department of Defense Bloggers Roundtable for Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. My name is Bradley Cantor with the Office of the Secretary of Defense Public Affairs. I'll be moderating today's call.

Today we are honored to have as our guests Brandon Underwood, member of the U.S. Army CERDEC Space and Terrestrial Communications Directorate -- or S&TCD -- Airborne Antennas and Integration Team, and Charles Maraldo, director of the CERDEC flight activity. Today our guests will discuss how they are incorporating optimized antenna solutions from the earliest stages of airframe -- of the airframe development process.

Before we begin the program, a note to our bloggers on the line today: Please remember to clearly state your name and blog or organization in advance of your question. Respect our guests' time and keep your questions succinct and to the point. And finally, please mute your phones unless you are asking questions. This will keep unnecessary noise from interrupting the roundtable.

And with that, I turn the discussion over to our guests.

BRANDON UNDERWOOD: Hey, good morning, everybody. My name is Brandon Underwood. We don't have the greatest speaker phone today, so if you can't hear me at any time, please feel free to ask me to repeat myself, and we might do likewise for you guys.

I support the Space and Terrestrial Communications Directorate within the U.S. Army CERDEC, that being the Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Command.

And we have within our CERDEC various directorates, like the Space and Terrestrial Communications Directorate, and also the Intelligence and Information Warfare Directorate, which Charlie Maraldo is associated with -- associated with, and you'll speak with him later.

But we have a close working relationship between the two directorates.

Within CERDEC S&TCD, I support the antenna technologies and analysis branch. And within that branch is the Airborne Antennas and Integration Team.

We're here today at the quad-A convention focused on airborne antennas. And our division -- our team, I should say -- we develop antennas both for long-term solutions, supporting future aircraft as well as short-term problems that might arise from the field, where the user community or the various PMs within the aviation community will bring a problem to our attention, and we will address it in short term -- (inaudible) --

(Background noise.)

STAFF: Sorry about that. We're in the conference call.

(Background noise.)

MR. UNDERWOOD: Sorry. As Kristen (sp) said, we have announcements going on in the background.

Within our branch, the antenna technologies and analysis branch, we have various contractual vehicles available to develop antenna solutions, like I said, both for the long term and the short term, and we also do in-house development work. And between our capabilities of the research and development end of things and the capabilities that Charlie Maraldo will talk about (you ?) with respect to airborne communications antennas and systems testing, we have the capability collectively to bring an antenna program from start to finish.

CHARLIE MARALDO: Hey, good morning. I'm Charlie Maraldo, the CERDEC flight activity, as was previously mentioned.

Our mission and the way with work with Brandon and all of the other entities within the Communications-Electronics Research and Development Center (sic) is to provide aviation support to developing technology.

By aviation support, what we have is we has a fleet of organic aircraft, government-owned aircraft, both rotor-wing and fixed-wing aircraft and unmanned aircraft that we can use to fly technology when it's ready to be put into the air. Our mission spans the entire area of the Communication- Electronics Research Development Center (sic), meaning -- Brandon spoke briefly about the communications, communications antenna area, technology area. We also cover or support all elements of

intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in addition to the other arenas of C4 -- command, control, communications and computers.

So we're able to flight-test radar systems, signals intelligence technology, electronic warfare. Our night-vision flight activity flies all sorts of electro-optical -- (inaudible) -- carries different types of other developing technologies.

And we're able to -- by getting this technology into the air as soon as possible in the development process, then you understand how well it is going to work in its target platforms. And by having an organic fleet of aircraft, we're able to have tight control and -- over flight tests and development. We have a limited airworthiness release authority, so we're able to safely and efficiently put our -- integrate systems onto our aircraft and fly them with our -- (inaudible) -- of army civilian pilots.

All of our pilots are -- we don't contract out our pilots. They're all veterans. They're all people with prior service, rotor and fixed-wing qualified. And they bring a strong addition to the test and evaluation team based on their war-fighter experience and, in very many instances, 20 or more years of research and development flight test experience.

The way that we -- the way that we officially execute these projects is by being able to integrate things, develop the A (ph) kit onto our aircraft, all with in-house expertise. So we'll have -- we have machine shops, sheet metal shops, composite shops; we've got wiring harnesses.

Anything it takes to integrate a component or a system or even a very immature technology onto an aircraft we can fabricate -- design, fabricate and then eventually integrate that capability onto an aircraft to understand how it will operate in (the airborne ?) environment.

STAFF: That's it from our side.

MR. CANTOR: Great. With that, I'm going to open up the questions, open the floor for questions from the bloggers. Anybody have any questions? (No response.) All right.

Well, I'd like to thank Mr. Underwood and Mr. Maraldo. If they have any final statements, I'd like to open the floor to them.

MR. MARALDO: Go ahead, Brandon.

MR. UNDERWOOD: I'd just like to mention that we rely a lot upon the services of CFA. When we finish developing an antenna at the laboratory and prototype stage, it's not a trivial matter of getting it on the aircraft. That's just a whole separate process in and of itself, so it takes a lot of planning between our two organizations, and each part of it is a major effort. So when I say we take a job from start to finish, there's a lot of different players involved. And between the two organizations, that's what it takes to make it happen.

MR. MARALDO: I can expand a little bit regarding our mission. So the CERDEC Flight Activity is an element of the Intelligence and Information Warfare Directorate, I2WD, now also headquartered at Aberdeen, Maryland. We're located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix- Lakehurst, formerly Lakehurst Naval Air Station side, in a very large and capable facility where we're able to both service, maintain and integrate and modify our aircraft.

But despite being an element of I2WD, the Intelligence Information Warfare Directorate, we're a resource that not only the CERDEC, the other elements of CERDEC -- Space and Terrestrial Comms, C2D -- can use, but also other elements of DOD. If there's a DOD- related purpose to evaluating, integrating a capability onto an aircraft, to mature a technology or to prepare it for eventual fielding, we can support those types of endeavors as long as, again, it is a defense-related issue. We can do that with other government agencies. We can support industry. If industry is working on a defense-related contract, and even if it were for another service, we can turn around and we can flight test -- we can flight test that capability, and basically we just get reimbursed for costs. So it's a very efficient way to execute a project where, again, we're joint, we're able to do joint support. Recently we executed a project with industry, the Navy, on a -- an IR countermeasures system. The Navy sponsored it. We flew it on an Army aircraft with Army pilots on the joint base, with the Air Force doing, you know, flight planning and control for us.

So, you know, having these different types of capabilities all existing on joint base and being able to support all of DOD is an outstanding resource that the government has at its disposal.

MR. CANTOR: Great. Thank you, gentlemen.

Today's program will be available online at [dodlive.mil](http://dodlive.mil), where you'll be able to access the story based on today's call, along with the source documents such as the audio file and a print transcript.

Again I'd like to thank Mr. Underwood and Mr. Maraldo and our blogger participants.

This concludes today's event. Feel free to disconnect at this time. Goodbye.

END.