

Williams Foundation Conference Accelerating the Transition to a Networked, Integrated Force

24 March 2022
National Gallery of Australia

Updated 18 March 2022

Aim

The aim of the March 2022 seminar is to examine progress in the establishment of the 5th generation force and identify lessons which further inform and accelerate Government and industry efforts to design, build, operate, and sustain increasingly lethal and survivable air and space capability.

Background

Since 2013 the Sir Richard Williams Foundation seminars have focused on building an integrated 5th generation force. Recent seminars have evolved from the acquisition of new platforms to the process of shaping and better understanding the environment in which the integrated force will prepare and operate. Moreover, they have highlighted the challenges of acting independently at an accelerated tempo and in sustained, high intensity, complex operations across all domains.

Almost a decade later, the 2022 seminars will reflect on the journey towards a 5th generation force and identify gaps, opportunities, and priorities for the development of next generation capability in the face of new threats and new risks.

Despite the operational challenges, the framework and apparatus of the 5th generation force is substantially in place. And while there is still plenty of work to be done, the shift from a focus on platforms to a broader appreciation of an integrated 5th generation system of systems represents an important milestone.

The scale of this achievement will be recognised in the seminar and will underscore the critical and ongoing importance of a highly skilled and increasingly integrated workforce across Defence, industry and academia.

The March seminar will set the scene for the October seminar where future force structure and preparedness considerations will be examined to further exploit and accelerate the next generation capabilities.

Lessons and Changes

The seminar in March will identify key lessons from the transition to a 5th generation force. It will highlight changes in the strategic environment and the increasingly sophisticated and time-sensitive 'lethality-survivability-affordability' trade-off necessary to build a balanced and relevant force.

While lethality and survivability have always important, what is now different is that they are both increasingly difficult to achieve. And the time imperative means we are always working against the clock to develop and deliver the capabilities essential for the execution of 5th generation operational concepts.

However, despite numerous successes we still find it difficult to rapidly link advanced concepts to fielded operational capability. The seminar will examine the gap between new technology and operational needs, and question whether the current process is fit for purpose. And if not, what needs to change?

The session will consider next generation air power capabilities across each of the Services, fixed and rotary wing, crewed and uncrewed.

Session one will focus upon what has changed since the original concept of integrated 5th generation air combat capability was first introduced into Australian defence planning and thinking. It will highlight the most significant changes to the strategic environment and how survivability has become more difficult to achieve due to an increasingly challenging threat environment.

It will show how the capability building blocks highlighted in previous seminars (electronic warfare, strike, unmanned systems, training, and space etc) are now being conceived as an integrated system of systems able to compete across each domain.

The second session will focus on the 'Innovation to fielded capability gap'. It will provide an insight into what has been achieved to date with a particular focus on the defence industry contribution to the establishment of acquisition and sustainment systems. Some areas will be identified as work in progress, and in others where new relationships and ways of working have delivered increased capability and capacity.

The final session will seek gaps and opportunities and areas which are likely to need significant further investment and prioritisation at the enterprise level. Service chiefs will provide insight into their thoughts about the future operating environment and key observations and lessons from the transition to a networked integrated force. This will set the scene for the next seminar in October.

Industry Perspectives

Industry participants are invited to contribute to the discussion about accelerating and enhancing lethality, survivability, and affordability of the integrated force. The industry perspective should address policy and process improvements as well as the future opportunities provided by new technology and an increasingly integrated defence and industry workforce management model:

- Sustainment and readiness
- Sensors
- Communication and Information systems
- Networked Weapons
- Infrastructure

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Program

Time	Topic	Speakers
0800-0830	Registration and light breakfast	
0830-0835	Welcoming Remarks	AIRMSHL Geoff Brown AO (Retd), Sir Richard Williams Foundation
0835-0845	Introduction and MC	John Conway, Sir Richard Williams Foundation
0845-0905	Keynote Address	General Kenneth Wilsbach, Commander Pacific Air Forces
0905-0925	Accelerating the Transition	AVM Robert Chipman AM, CSC, Head Military Strategic Commitments
0925-0945	Indo Pacific Context	LtGen Steven Rudder, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific and Commanding General Fleet Marine Force
0945-1005	5 th Gen Information Environment	MAJGEN Susan Coyle AM, CSC, DSM, Head of Information Warfare
1005-1045	Break – Morning Tea	
1045-1105	Multi Domain operations Threats and Opportunities	AVM Chris Deeble AO, CSC (Retd), Executive Director Strategy, Northrop Grumman Australia
1105-1125	Not Just Platforms’ – Architectural & Policy Considerations Enabling Truly Effective 5th Gen Joint C2	Rod Equid, Chief of Enterprise Focus Areas, Raytheon Australia
1125-1145	The Italian Air Force, a 5th gen. Air Force and beyond”	Lt. Gen. Aurelio Colagrande, Italian Deputy Chief of Air Force
1145-1205	Acquiring and Sustaining Next Gen Capabilities	Tony Dalton AM, Deputy Secretary National Naval Shipbuilding
1205-1225	UK Perspective	Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston, KCB, CBE, ADC, Chief of the Air Staff, Royal Air Force
1225-1240	Army Perspective	BRIG Ian Langford, DSC and Bars (PhD), Director General Future Land Warfare (rep Chief of Army)
1240-1355	Lunch	
1355-1415	Getting the bigger picture - Networking the Force	Tom Rowden, Vice President International Strategy and Business Development
1415-1435	Future Trends	Peter Jennings PSM, Australian Strategic Policy Institute
1435-1450	Navy Perspective	CDRE Darron Kavanagh, Director General Warfare Innovation Navy, representing Chief of Navy r
1450-1505	Air Force Perspective	AIRMSHL Mel Hupfeld AO, DSC, Chief of Air Force
1505-1515	Formal Close	AIRMSHL Geoff Brown AO (Retd), Sir Richard Williams Foundation