



## Conference Attendees Interact With Fort Lewis Warfighters

Meg Williams

**The 2003 Acquisition Senior Leaders' Conference set out to make a difference for conference attendees in many ways. Conference host Claude M. Bolton Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology/Army Acquisition Executive (ASAALT/AAE), changed the conference scope to more accurately reflect the audience invited. The 300-plus leaders who attended the Aug. 12-14 event comprised Senior Executive Service members, senior acquisition leadership within the Army's program executive officers; program, project and product managers; and acquisition commanders.**

The conference was purposely held near Fort Lewis, WA, so that attendees could interact with warfighters and learn about their experiences with newly fielded equipment. Attendees were able to climb into Stryker vehicles, work the flight control training system of a UH-M Black Hawk, pop the hood of a 1097 Humvee to get a good look at an Under-the-Hood Power System that provides electricity to a tactical operating center and handle the latest tools fielded to soldiers by the Rapid Equipping Force.

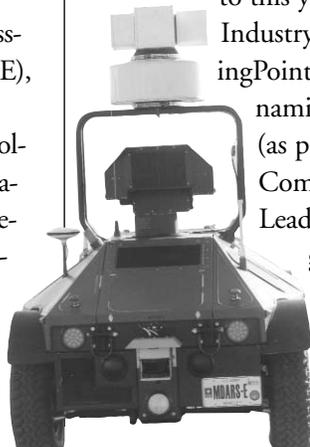
The Fort Lewis setting also allowed Product Manager, Physical Security Equipment to demonstrate the Battlefield Anti-Intrusion System (BAIS). People walking across a field were detected by geoseismic/acoustic sensors placed in the ground. The sensors alerted the Mobile Detection Assessment Response System (MDARS-E), which automatically drove to the walkers and sent video images to soldiers remotely monitoring the situation. BAIS showed potential as a security and patrolling device that allows soldiers to observe areas from a safe distance out of harm's way. These displays and, interaction

with Fort Lewis soldiers, helped convey this year's conference theme, *Strengthening Our Link With the Warfighter*.

COL Mary Fuller, ASC Director, wanted the conference to be more interactive while the briefings were presented as well. "This will not be death by viewgraph," she promised. Presenters often stopped to take questions during briefings so that the audience could be involved along the way instead of holding questions until the end. This approach facilitated an open dialog and allowed for more lively sessions and different viewpoints.

Inviting industry members to speak during the conference and adding an exhibit component was also new to this year's conference.

Industry partners BearingPoint, General Dynamics and Boeing (as part of the Future Combat Systems/Lead Systems Integrator team) set up displays.



Government exhibitors included the U.S. Army Model & Simulation Office; Army Environment Center; U.S. Army Test & Evaluation Command; U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command; Defense Contract Management Agency; Joint Program Executive Office, Chemical & Biological Defense; Program Executive Office (PEO), Ammunition; PEO, Aviation; PEO, Combat Support & Combat Service Support; PEO Command, Control & Communications Tactical; PEO, Enterprise Information Systems; PEO, Intelligence Electronic Warfare & Sensors; PEO, Simulation, Training & Instrumentation; and Product Manager, Counterintelligence/Human Intelligence Management Systems.

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