

LTG Susan S. Lawrence, New Army Chief Information Officer, Calls for Cultural Shift

Margaret C. Roth

The Army's new Chief Information Officer (CIO)/G-6, LTG Susan S. Lawrence, says the Army's sweeping network modernization effort, its number one priority in modernization, will require a fundamental cultural change.

LTG Susan S. Lawrence is the Army's new CIO/G-6. (U.S. Army photo.)



LTG SUSAN S. LAWRENCE

LTG Susan S. Lawrence, a native of Iowa, has served in the Army since 1972.

She was an enlisted Soldier until 1979, when she received her commission as a second lieutenant. Since then, Lawrence has held a variety of command and staff positions at all levels.

Before her appointment on March 3, 2011, as the Army Chief Information Officer (CIO)/G-6, Lawrence was the Commanding General (CG), U.S.

Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal Command (Army), Fort Huachuca, AZ.

Lawrence also has served as the CG, 5th Signal Command, while also serving as the CIO/Assistant Chief of Staff, G-6 for U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army. She commanded the 7th Signal Brigade, 5th Signal Command, before serving as Chief of Staff and Vice Director, J-6, Joint Chiefs of Staff at the

Pentagon. She also served as the Director, Command and Control, Communications and Computer Systems, J-6, U.S. Central Command.

Lawrence holds a B.S. degree in psychology from Campbell University and an M.B.A. in information systems management from the University of Georgia. She is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Army War College.

Lawrence, who was promoted to lieutenant general and on March 3 was appointed as the Army CIO/G-6, previously headed a comprehensive review as special assistant to Vice Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Peter W. Chiarelli. The review looked for information technology (IT) efficiencies in the areas of personnel, processes, requirements (including technology, evolution, and testing), and policy.

She shared her perspectives on IT efficiencies during a panel discussion Feb. 24 on "Network Enabled Mission Command" at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Institute of Land Warfare's Winter Symposium and Exposition in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

"We run into a unique environment called culture," she told the audience of military and industry. "We're really going to have to change our thinking," she said, to make the most of the opportunities in network modernization.

Among other findings, the IT efficiencies group identified more than 70 regulations governing the network, many of them in conflict. "Most were from the Industrial Age, not the Information Age," Lawrence said. The review's findings will feed into an overarching network strategy document that the Army is preparing.

The Path Forward

"Right now, the network is the Army's number one modernization effort," said Lawrence in an Army statement announcing her appointment. "We want a network that can provide Soldiers and civilians information of all categories and forms, as well as a means to collaborate in real time, at the exact moment required, in any environment, under all circumstances."

As the CIO, Lawrence reports directly to the Secretary of the Army. She is responsible for setting strategic direction and objectives, and supervises all Army command, control, communications, and computers and IT functions.

As the G-6, Lawrence supports the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Army Staff in the areas of information management, network operations (including computer network defense), force structure, and the equipping and employment of signal forces. As CIO/G-6, she oversees a \$10 billion annual budget for IT.

Lawrence succeeds LTG Jeffrey A. Sorenson, who retired from the Army in November.

Encouraging Results

Network modernization necessarily involves multiple players, Lawrence said. Asked during a

question-and-answer session at the AUSA meeting who ultimately would be responsible for its success, she said, "This is clearly a team sport, and the picture's getting clearer every day."

Lawrence was optimistic about the prospects for success, noting that the Army has already demonstrated the capability to connect network mission planning in Afghanistan and in CONUS. MG James L. Terry, Commanding General of the 10th Mountain Division (Light) and Commander of Regional Command South, NATO International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, was able to access mission planning documents developed in CONUS as soon as he arrived in theater in November, Lawrence noted.

"We're there. We've just got to be able to get this executed globally. We're going to put a battle system command in the cloud in the very near future," she said.

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