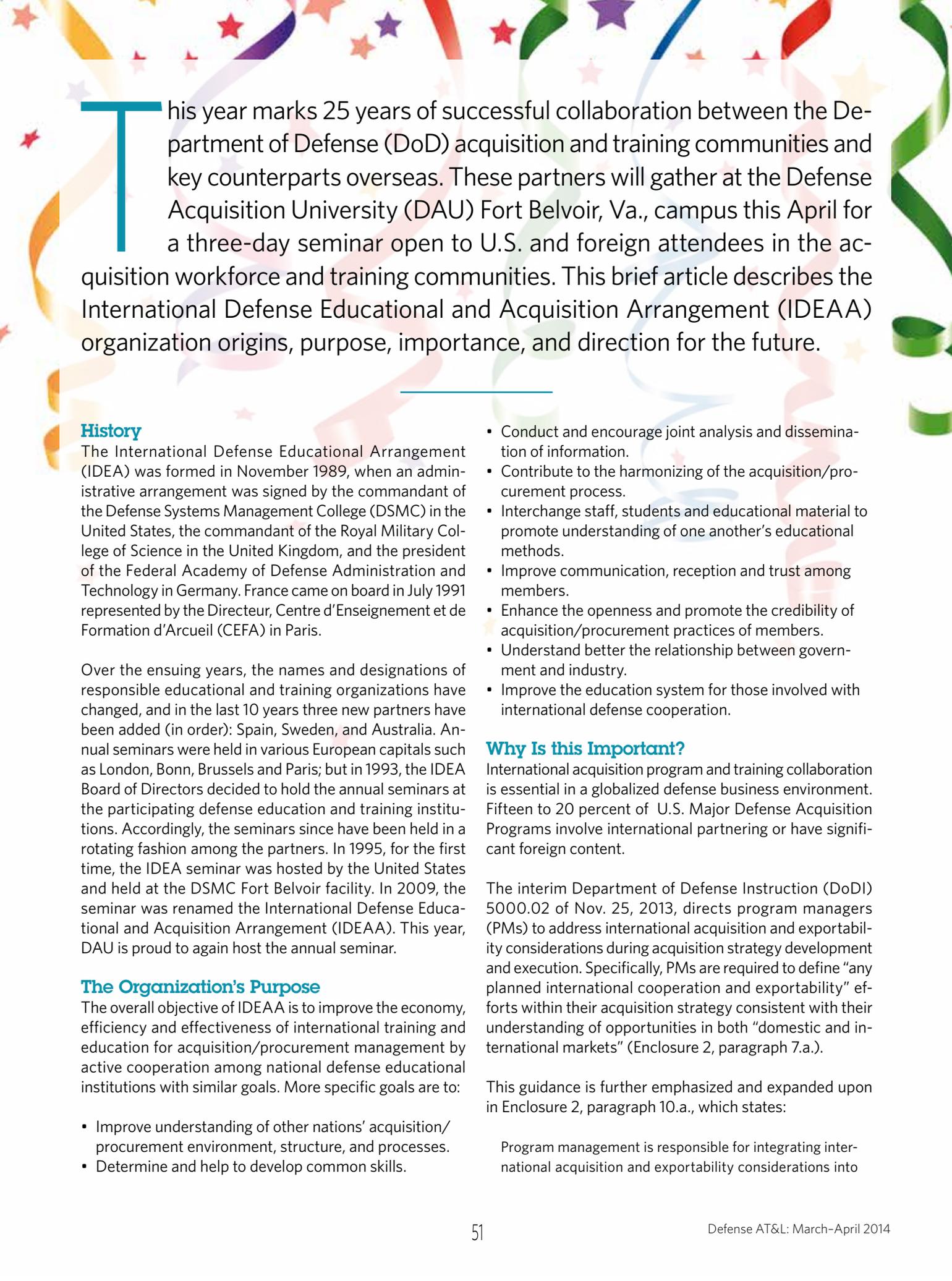




IDEAA Celebrates Its Silver Anniversary

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This year marks 25 years of successful collaboration between the Department of Defense (DoD) acquisition and training communities and key counterparts overseas. These partners will gather at the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Fort Belvoir, Va., campus this April for a three-day seminar open to U.S. and foreign attendees in the acquisition workforce and training communities. This brief article describes the International Defense Educational and Acquisition Arrangement (IDEAA) organization origins, purpose, importance, and direction for the future.

History

The International Defense Educational Arrangement (IDEA) was formed in November 1989, when an administrative arrangement was signed by the commandant of the Defense Systems Management College (DSMC) in the United States, the commandant of the Royal Military College of Science in the United Kingdom, and the president of the Federal Academy of Defense Administration and Technology in Germany. France came on board in July 1991 represented by the Directeur, Centre d'Enseignement et de Formation d'Arcueil (CEFA) in Paris.

Over the ensuing years, the names and designations of responsible educational and training organizations have changed, and in the last 10 years three new partners have been added (in order): Spain, Sweden, and Australia. Annual seminars were held in various European capitals such as London, Bonn, Brussels and Paris; but in 1993, the IDEA Board of Directors decided to hold the annual seminars at the participating defense education and training institutions. Accordingly, the seminars since have been held in a rotating fashion among the partners. In 1995, for the first time, the IDEA seminar was hosted by the United States and held at the DSMC Fort Belvoir facility. In 2009, the seminar was renamed the International Defense Educational and Acquisition Arrangement (IDEAA). This year, DAU is proud to again host the annual seminar.

The Organization's Purpose

The overall objective of IDEAA is to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of international training and education for acquisition/procurement management by active cooperation among national defense educational institutions with similar goals. More specific goals are to:

- Improve understanding of other nations' acquisition/procurement environment, structure, and processes.
- Determine and help to develop common skills.

- Conduct and encourage joint analysis and dissemination of information.
- Contribute to the harmonizing of the acquisition/procurement process.
- Interchange staff, students and educational material to promote understanding of one another's educational methods.
- Improve communication, reception and trust among members.
- Enhance the openness and promote the credibility of acquisition/procurement practices of members.
- Understand better the relationship between government and industry.
- Improve the education system for those involved with international defense cooperation.

Why Is this Important?

International acquisition program and training collaboration is essential in a globalized defense business environment. Fifteen to 20 percent of U.S. Major Defense Acquisition Programs involve international partnering or have significant foreign content.

The interim Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 5000.02 of Nov. 25, 2013, directs program managers (PMs) to address international acquisition and exportability considerations during acquisition strategy development and execution. Specifically, PMs are required to define "any planned international cooperation and exportability" efforts within their acquisition strategy consistent with their understanding of opportunities in both "domestic and international markets" (Enclosure 2, paragraph 7.a.).

This guidance is further emphasized and expanded upon in Enclosure 2, paragraph 10.a., which states:

Program management is responsible for integrating international acquisition and exportability considerations into

the program's Acquisition Strategy at each major milestone or decision point. Program management will consider the potential demand and likelihood of cooperative development or production, Direct Commercial Sales, or Foreign Military Sales early in the acquisition planning process; and, where appropriate, program managers will pursue cooperative opportunities and international involvement throughout the acquisition life cycle to enhance international cooperation and improve interoperability in accordance with DoD Instruction 2010.06.

The importance of this increased emphasis on international acquisition and exportability in the recently released interim DoDI 5000.02 is based on two fundamental principles:

- Allied and friendly nation participation in DoD acquisition programs builds partner nation capabilities, increasing their national and coalition operational effectiveness.
- Partner nation involvement in our programs' development, production, and logistics support results in both direct and indirect cost savings, markedly enhancing U.S. and partner nation affordability throughout the life cycle.

Efforts that strengthen and focus collaborative partnering pay "real money" dividends as well by using strategies to enhance program affordability. Some of these "dividends" can be realized during the various acquisition phases:

Technology Maturation & Risk Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to foreign technology can reduce technology development cost and risk. • Foreign Nondevelopmental Items can reduce/avoid development.
Engineering & Manufacturing Development (EMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, Development, Test and Evaluation costs can be shared. • Foreign test facilities can be used at reduced costs.
Production & Deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonrecurring costs can be shared. • Economies of scale available through defense sales.
Operations & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of nonrecurring modernization and upgrade costs. • Creation of overseas support footprints.

Since PMs are required to address international acquisition and exportability considerations, and affordability benefits can be gained, organizations like IDEAA can be vital tools. The question often is not "can we afford the time and effort to participate," but perhaps, "can we afford not to?"

This Year's IDEAA Seminar

Subject to scheduling issues, this year's seminar will be key-noted by Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Frank Kendall and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Katharina McFarland.

The first day will include presentations and discussions of the new DoDI 5000.02 changes including emphasis on international acquisition program areas and related DoD Better Buying Power Initiatives. Similar activities will be presented from the acquisition communities of key, selected foreign partners. Several panels will explore international acquisition program benefits and challenges while offering thoughts on future objectives.

The closing discussions of the day will include practitioner perspectives from "successful"—and "unsuccessful"—programs. The highlight will be a presentation summarizing 40 years of DoD program problems and the reasons for those problems. They probably will surprise attendees.

The second day will focus on training best practices, innovations and required evolution to cope with the challenges in acquisition programs described during the first day's discussions.

The third day will incorporate smaller group sessions designed to take some of the core issues to a more detailed level while encouraging attendee interaction and feedback. This is the chance to ask penetrating questions and engage in substantive discussion.

IDEAA's Future Direction

First and foremost, this year's seminar at DAU will be an important event for vital collaboration in a global defense environment that seeks affordability and other objectives through international cooperation.

The organization is working to structure its successful long relationship into a formal agreement that will serve as the basis for exchanges of more and more complex information and even faculty and/or students. It will allow the joint funding, execution, and publication of research important for better acquisition outcomes in the future.

There are ongoing workshops and seminars held between two or more partners each year to enhance their acquisition training. In addition, a major project is under way to re-create and expand several volumes of comparisons of the partner countries and other countries' acquisition systems so we may operate more effectively.

In short, the IDEAA directors are working hard, and planning carefully to enhance our collective and individual skill sets and processes to do the tough job of acquisition better. Participation from our acquisition and training communities is key. Come participate. We need your experience and ideas! 🍷

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