2018 Intelligence & National Security Summit: Adoption of Innovative Technology

Panel

- Stacey Dixon, Ph.D., Director, IARPA
- Jean Stack, Managing Director, Baird
- David Tennenhouse, Ph. D., Chief Research Officer, VMware
- Kevin Kelly, CEO, LGS Solutions (moderator)

Topic Overview

With the advent of new technology and information sharing in the 21st century, innovation is happening everywhere. This panel focused on the efforts being made by the U.S. Intelligence Community to identify and adopt new technology in order to enhance its abilities and meet its goals.

Panel Summary

The government is working closely with industry and academia to develop and adopt new technology. While government agencies like IARPA engage with individuals and groups that reach out to them, they also want to engage independent companies with valuable R&D investments. The government is also committed to finding new ways to engage the “young techie workforce” by combining the latest technology with the Intelligence Community’s unique mission set.
Key Insights:

- Technology matters most in government when it is applied to solve challenges that would otherwise hinder mission success.
- Developers will not lose their intellectual property if they chose to work with the U.S. government.
- The perception that the government's acquisition process is lengthy and onerous is the biggest obstacle to partnering with technology innovators. The government's time frame is often too long for the tech community.
- However, innovators can benefit from the government's long time horizon. Without the burden of showing short-term investment returns, DARPA and IARPA have the knowledge and patience to see their projects through in ways that Silicon Valley investors often do not.
- The opportunity to assist the Intelligence Community's unique national security missions is an incentive for the private sector to engage in the government market.

Recommendations:

- Government and industry should continue to hybridize knowledge to increase their ability to work together.
- When working with industry, government should promote technology development by challenging companies to build products as quickly as they can and testing them in real-world environments.
- The government should develop more efficient invoicing and reporting requirements to facilitate working with industry, particularly with smaller companies.
- The Intelligence Community, and the U.S. government writ large, should inspire and engage young innovators, particularly from immigrant communities, to undertake advanced research in the United States and apply their efforts to national security challenges.

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