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### **Defense Budget Cuts Require Innovative Management of Aging Electronic Warfare Systems**

Alexandria, VA, July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012: In wake of constrained Department of Defense (DoD) budgets and with the threat of sequestration looming, the Association of Old Crows (AOC) headed to Dahlgren, VA, July 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> for their EMS Combat Systems Life Cycle Management Conference. This inaugural event brought together over 140 attendees and speakers from defense industries, government, and military to the University of Mary Washington Education and Research Center to discuss the criticality of sustainment and acquisition for Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS) combat systems. Chairmen Joe Caliri and Stan VanderWerf designed the conference to address EMS combat systems lifecycle management through strategies of integration and cost-effective methods.

Captain Michael Smith, Commander of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Dahlgren Division, began the first day by welcoming conference keynote speaker, Congressman Rob Wittman, who candidly reviewed the challenges of sequestration and the importance of managing life cycle costs for weapon systems. Mr. Jaymie Durnan, Senior Advisor to the Principal Deputy ASD, Research & Engineering, spoke to the same tone while briefing the realities Electronic Warfare (EW) faces in the Pentagon. Subsequent presentations gave service and industry perspectives on EW sustainment. The speakers in the afternoon focused on advanced methods used to integrate combat systems with EW systems to provide improved functional capability to the warfighter. "Execute support program that meets materiel readiness and operational support performance requirements and sustains system in most cost-effective manner," said Lee Simonetta, Associate Lab Director from Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), in his presentation on GTRI's capabilities in supporting DoD's EW sustainment activities. The second day of presentations centered on cost-effective developments through identifying strategies for decoupling EMS/EW combat systems from platforms, product line architecture and training programs, with case studies that revolved around the Aegis system, and the Surface EW Improvement Program case study.

The final day, attendees had the opportunity to tour Dahlgren's Naval Surface Warfare Center. The tour included a visit to the surface warfare gun range and a demonstration of a naval 5-inch gun. Attendees received briefings from the Aegis team, toured Dahlgren's anechoic chamber, and saw up-close the Navy's electromagnetic railgun. Attendees visited the simulated carrier deck electromagnetic interference test facility, and numerous EW facilities, including the Navy's Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program (SEWIP) activities.

AOC is a non-profit international Electronic Warfare/Information Operations (EW/IO) association which promotes electromagnetic spectrum operations and related activities across military, civilian and commercial applications.