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Air Force Chief Scientist pays visit to treaty monitoring center

By Susan A. Romano, AFTAC Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Chief Scientist of the Air Force paid a visit to the Department of Defense’s sole nuclear treaty monitoring center recently to meet with senior leaders and attend the center’s annual Research and Development Roadmap Forum.

Dr. Richard Joseph was one of 169 mission partners and community stakeholders who attended the Air Force Technical Applications Center’s annual forum, which was designed to focus on AFTAC’s multi-faceted, global mission.



“The purpose of the R&D Roadmap is to codify pathways to meet forthcoming challenges of our treaty monitoring and nuclear forensics mission,” said Dr. William Junek, AFTAC senior scientist. “We were fortunate enough to have Dr. Joseph join us this year, and his contributions during our breakout sessions were invaluable.”

Ed Darmiento, project officer for the forum, worked closely with numerous subject matters experts at AFTAC to put together a robust program that included briefings by AFTAC’s principal customers and national authorities as well as breakout sessions to allow attendees to network with each other.

The first day consisted of briefings that covered a variety of topics: AFTAC’s mission overview, R&D blueprint development, and how new innovation concepts fit into AFTAC’s treaty monitoring and technical forensics mission.

Day two was a collection of breakout sessions that gave attendees the opportunity to provide, modify and refine inputs to AFTAC’s draft 2019 R&D roadmap.

Ed Darmiento, AFTAC’s chief of emerging technologies, was the project officer for the forum, and he and his team invested more than 1,000 man-hours to logistical planning that included the event agenda, lodging, transportation, security, and meals.

“This year, we wanted to incorporate as many suggestions from the previous forums as possible to show a continuous dedication to make it better from year to year,” said Darmiento. “We also modernized the registration process, which included commissioning a website to streamline the registration process and make it user-friendly. I think we hit the mark.”

Prior to the start of the forum, the Air Force Chief Scientist had the opportunity to tour AFTAC’s radiochemistry lab, Innovation Lab, and 24/7 operations center.

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Joseph, a former commissioned officer in the Air Force, has more than 40 years of experience as a physicist, directed energy researcher, senior program manager, national security advisor, and government executive. In his role as the Air Force's senior scientist, he advises the Air Force Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Air Force by providing assessments on a wide range of scientific issues. He is responsible for identifying and analyzing technical issues to bring them to the attention of other senior Air Force and governmental leaders.



"I'm extremely proud of the team who navigated all the moving parts to make a program like this such a success," said Dr. Glenn E. Sjoden, AFTAC Chief Scientist. "Until you actually put together an event of this magnitude, you truly can't appreciate how much work is actually involved. It takes a remarkable team comprised of members working across multiple directorates to make a forum of this complexity successful."

Sjoden added, "I hope Dr. Joseph and the rest of our stakeholders walked away with a greater understanding of AFTAC's global mission, and I hope they will return next year with even bigger and better ideas to discuss."