



ADAPTING TO THE EVOLUTION: INSIGHTS ON THE ARMORED VEHICLE INDUSTRY



ADAPTING TO THE EVOLUTION: INSIGHTS ON THE ARMORED VEHICLE INDUSTRY



As conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza demonstrate the continued tactical and operational importance of armored capabilities in the modern battlespace, it is imperative that the US and allied nations continue to modernize their armored vehicle forces.

From June 25-26 leaders in the armored vehicles space will gather in Austin, Texas for the Armored Vehicles USA Conference to discuss numerous US and allied armored vehicle programs, strategic issues to the threat environment, and the challenges of MRO. Over the course of our conference, military practitioners, research and development colleagues, acquisition managers and partners from industry will share thoughts on emerging technologies, changing CONOPS, and preparations for the challenges of the Army of 2030 and beyond.

Before the conference, IDGA sat down with General (R) David Perkins, the conference's chairman, to discuss what he is looking forward to in this year's event. General (R) Perkins last served as the 15th Commander of the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) which is responsible for designing, acquiring, building and constantly improving the US Army which is one of the largest and most complex organizations in the world. Previously General (R) Perkins also commanded at all levels in the US Army from CPT to Major Army Command at the four-star level. He has multiple combat tours to include commanding a Brigade and later an Infantry Division in Iraq.

What do you expect to be the dominant topics of conversation at armored vehicles USA this year? Any different from years past?

Each year brings its own set of dynamics, reflecting the evolving landscape of global security. Last year, discussions primarily revolved around lessons learned from the conflict in Ukraine, with a focus on conventional warfare and armored vehicles. This year, however, we're seeing additional complexities emerge, particularly with the recent events in Israel and Gaza.

The situation in Israel and Gaza presents a different kind of conflict, one that transitions from conventional warfare to counterinsurgency and occupation scenarios. This shift in dynamics necessitates a broader range of capabilities and specialized vehicles. Therefore, I anticipate a significant portion of our discussions at Armored Vehicles USA will revolve around analyzing these recent developments and extracting valuable lessons.

What's essential to understand is that there's no one-size-fits-all solution in modern warfare. It's about adapting to the specific challenges of each conflict and understanding how capabilities evolve over time. Looking back on our discussions over the past three years, it's evident that the landscape of armored warfare is constantly changing. As we delve into our third year, we can reflect on the wide array of topics we've covered and how our understanding has evolved in a relatively short span of time.

This year's event has blocs focused on robotics, leadership, training, and more. Is there one bloc you expect attendees to be most interested in? Also, why is it important for an event to cover a variety of topics relevant to the armored vehicles space?

I'll start by answering the second part of the question because the importance of covering a diverse range of topics at events like these cannot be overstated. Armored warfare is not solely about the vehicles themselves, but rather how they integrate within broader military strategies and operations. This integration involves leadership, training, and various other factors. Therefore, by encompassing a wide spectrum of subjects, we provide attendees with a comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in modern armored warfare.

Now, regarding the bloc that I anticipate will generate the most interest, I believe it will be the one focused on robotics and autonomous operations. This interest stems from recent global events, including conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, where autonomous technologies have played increasingly prominent roles. What's particularly notable is the democratization of these technologies. Previously limited to major military powers, autonomy is now accessible to a broader range of actors. Consequently, understanding how to leverage and defend against autonomous systems has become a pressing concern for militaries worldwide. As autonomy continues to shape the battlefield, addressing these challenges will be paramount for attendees seeking to stay ahead in armored vehicle strategies.

How is the concept of survivability changing in 2024 and how do we weigh that in terms of the iron triangle? How does C-UAS play into the decision making on survivability?

The Iron Triangle



The concept of survivability in 2024 has evolved significantly from traditional perspectives. In the past, survivability was often measured by the thickness of armor and the resilience of individual vehicles. However, with the emergence of new threats such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and advanced anti-tank missiles, our approach to survivability has shifted.

We now understand that survivability is not solely about the protection of individual vehicles but rather the resilience of the entire formation. This shift transforms the traditional notion of the iron triangle, which historically focused on the trade-offs between firepower, mobility, and protection. In today's landscape, survivability becomes a multifaceted consideration that encompasses not only vehicle armor but also the integration of counter-UAS capabilities, advanced sensors, and effective tactics.

C-UAS plays a crucial role in shaping decision-making regarding survivability. As unmanned aerial threats become more prevalent on the battlefield, our ability to detect, track, and neutralize these threats directly impacts the survivability of our forces. C-UAS measures are essential components of the broader strategy to protect our formations and ensure their operational effectiveness.

With decision making on Robotic Combat Vehicles (RCV) and XM 30 expected within the next few years, how will that impact armored vehicle formations?

The impending decisions on the Robotic Combat Vehicles (RCV) and XM 30 are poised to significantly impact armored vehicle formations in the United States. Particularly focusing on the XM 30, which represents a fundamental shift not just in vehicle capabilities, but also in how we approach acquisition and battlefield tactics.

The XM 30 isn't merely a platform for transporting soldiers across the battlefield; it's driving a transformation in the Army's approach to warfare and procurement. This vehicle embodies the concept of open architecture, which extends beyond its physical design to revolutionize the entire formation's structure and operation.

By embracing open architecture principles, we're not just building a vehicle; we're reimagining the very framework of our formations. It's about creating a more adaptable, plug-and-play environment that enables rapid integration of new technologies and capabilities. This approach contrasts with the traditional model of vehicle acquisition, where upgrades and updates are slow and cumbersome.

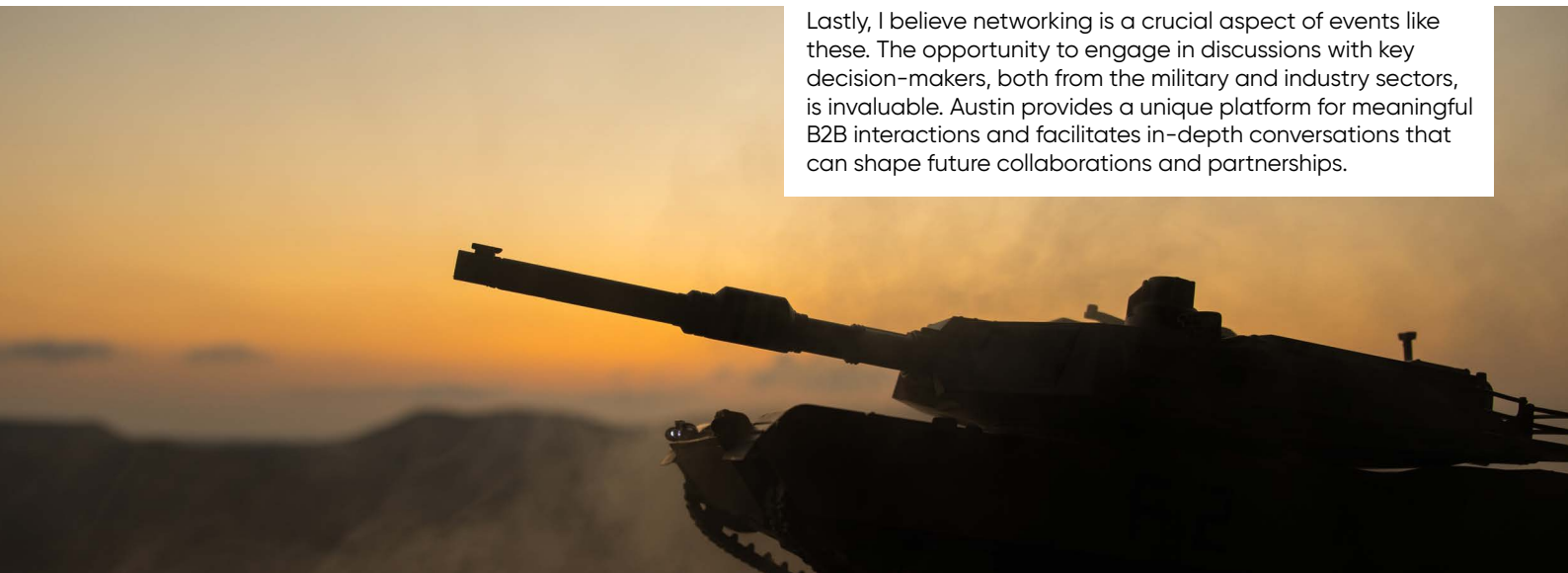
The significance of these new vehicles lies in their ability to usher in a new era of agility and innovation within our armored formations. They allow us to stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly evolving technological landscape, where speed and adaptability are paramount.

What are some key lessons you hope attendees of this year's conference walk away having gained?

I have a couple of lessons in mind that I hope attendees will take away from Armored Vehicles USA. Firstly, I hope they recognize the dynamic nature of our field. As we've seen over the past few years, the topics and technologies discussed have evolved significantly. This underscores the importance of staying current and engaged in the ever-changing landscape of armored warfare.

Secondly, I hope attendees understand the imperative for industry stakeholders to keep pace with this rapid change. Governments and militaries expect the latest and most advanced technologies in the vehicles they procure. Therefore, it's essential for OEMs to continuously innovate and integrate new technologies swiftly to meet these expectations.

Lastly, I believe networking is a crucial aspect of events like these. The opportunity to engage in discussions with key decision-makers, both from the military and industry sectors, is invaluable. Austin provides a unique platform for meaningful B2B interactions and facilitates in-depth conversations that can shape future collaborations and partnerships.





ARMORED VEHICLES CONFERENCE

JOIN IDGA'S ARMORED VEHICLES CONFERENCE THIS SUMMER

June 25-26, 2024 | Austin, Texas



GENERAL (RET.) DAVID G. PERKINS
Former Commanding General
**US Army Training and Doctrine
Command**



**LIEUTENANT GENERAL
KARL GINGRICH**
Deputy Chief of Staff for
Programs, G-8
US Army



MAJOR GENERAL GLENN A. DEAN
Program Executive Officer, Ground
Combat Systems
US Army



**BRIGADIER GENERAL
MICHAEL LALOR**
Commanding General, Tank-
Automotive and Armaments
Command (TACOM)
US Army



**BRIGADIER GENERAL
MICHAEL SIMMERING**
Commandant, US Army Armor School,
Training and Doctrine Command
US Army



MR. GARRY BISHOP, SES
Deputy Director, Operational
Test & Evaluation, Land and
Expeditionary Warfare
Office of the Secretary of Defense



COLONEL ARMIN DIRKS
Federal Office of Bundeswehr
Equipment, Information Technology
and In-Service Support
German Bundeswehr



MR. STEPHEN BOWDREN, SES
Program Executive Officer, Land
Systems
USMC