The Information Business

A Profile of the Defense Technical Information Center

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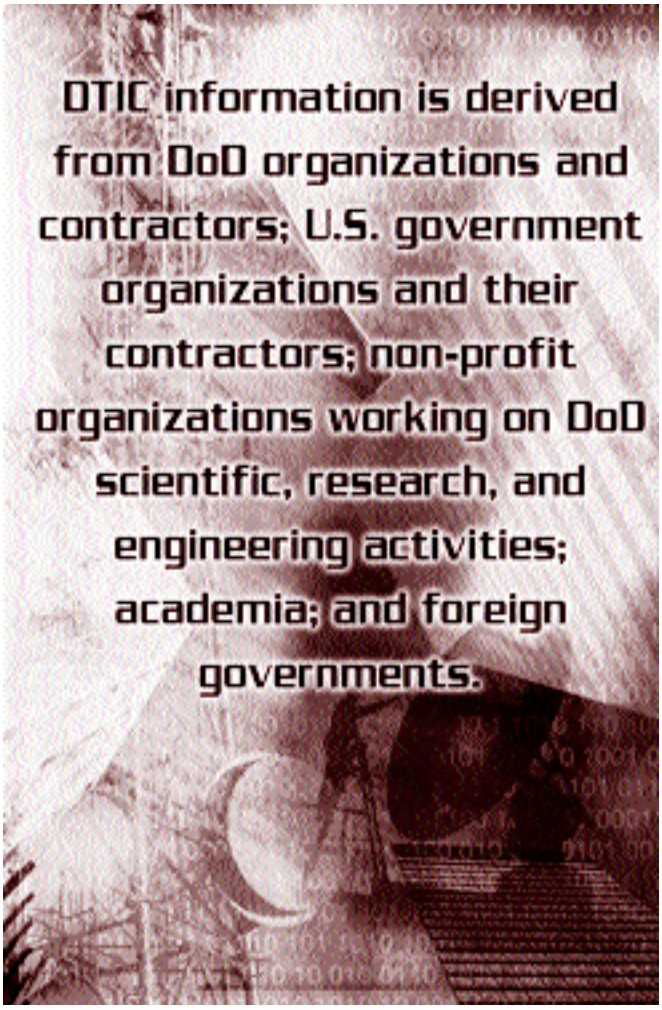
The Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC®, pronounced "Dee-tick") collects and distributes authoritative Department of Defense scientific, research, and engineering information to the defense community. Through a major portion of the 1990s, DTIC was part of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition). A DoD reorganization in 1998 transferred DTIC to the Defense Information Systems Agency. In 2004, we returned to the acquisition, technology, and logistics community. Now a DoD field activity, DTIC is one of several organizations whose work reaches across all segments of the Department.

DTIC reports to Dr. Ronald Sega, director, Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E). Sega calls DTIC the "DoD technical information broker" that will play a vital role in DDR&E's mission. In his view, technology is critical to DoD transformation. He would like to see every DoD researcher, acquisition professional, tester and/or operator sit down at the computer and find out what the DoD is doing in research, why we are doing the work, when it will be completed, and who knows more about this information.

Specialized Information Solutions

DTIC is a major player in the DoD e-gov initiative to consolidate information about federally funded R&D. In April, DTIC and DDR&E launched the R&E Portal providing one-stop access to DoD research and engineering information. The portal lets users "intelligently" search a wide range of defense-related information and export results to desktop applications. Initially, this new service, located at <https://rdte.osd.mil>, is available to DTIC registered users (see below) who are either DoD employees or DoD contractors.

Our primary customers are those who have a legitimate business relationship with DoD. In November 2004, there were close to 11,000 registered DTIC users, with more than 60 percent DoD employees, close to 30 percent from organizations contracted to the government, and the remaining 10 percent from non-DoD federal agencies, colleges, universities and research centers. The first step in getting information from DTIC is to register for services at <www.dtic.mil/dtic/registration/index.html>.



Forming one facet of DTIC administrative activities are the management and funding contractor-operated joint service-oriented information analysis centers to be found at <http://iac.dtic.mil>. Chartered by the DoD, IACs locate and analyze scientific and technical information in specific subject areas and are staffed by experienced technical-area scientists, engineers, and information specialists. The IACs possess historical, technical, scientific, and related data collected on a worldwide basis. Many of their products and services are free—for example, the latest scientific and engineering information on specific technical subjects, and consultation with or referral to world-recognized technical experts.

Schwalb *is public affairs officer for the Defense Technical Information Center.*

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A Leader in Exploiting the Web

The Directorate of Component Information Support was established in 1991 to exploit DTIC's expertise in information science and technology. Since then, DTIC has supported many DoD components in developing tools and processes that enhance the storage, retrieval, and use of information. An effective support program has been created for senior-level planners and other users of information resources. This shared infrastructure allows many organizations to obtain technologies and resources that no single organization could afford on its own.

An important part of modern military campaigns is public awareness, and DTIC plays a vital role in this effort. Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, DTIC staff worked with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Public Affairs, to build and make ready for launch in two days the Defend America Web site, located at <www.defendamerica.mil>.

In 2004, DTIC worked on the Web site of the Regional Air Movement Control Center (RAMCC), which coordinates the movement of fixed-wing aircraft in support of coalition military, humanitarian and commercial air operations over Iraqi, Afghani and Pakistani airfields. RAMCC promotes the safety and efficiency of military, peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance and other operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The site was used quite heavily during the Afghan inauguration ceremonies in December 2004.

To Distribute or Not to Distribute

DTIC provides a wide range of data and information products on policy, scientific and technical planning, budget, R&D descriptions, management, test and evaluation, research results, training, law, command histories, conference proceedings, DoD directives and instructions, foreign documents and translations, journal articles, security classification guides, technical reports, and summaries of works in progress.

While DTIC has much material available to the public (almost half of DoD's technical reports are publicly available the day they are published), some information has a security classification. The DoD's scientific and technical information is always categorized (or "marked," the term used in the defense

The DTIC Collection

Technical Reports Database — over 2,000,000 reports in print and nonprint formats conveying the results of defense-sponsored research, development, test, and evaluation efforts. Between 30,000 and 35,000 new documents are added annually.

TRAIL (Technical Reports Automated Information List) is a free electronic mailing list that automatically distributes citations to DTIC's unclassified, unlimited technical reports recently added to the DTIC Technical Reports database.

Research Summaries Database — descriptions of DoD research in progress; available to registered users only. The collection consists of more than 300,000 active and inactive summaries from 1965 to the present.

Independent Research and Development Database — over 169,000 descriptions (dating back to the mid-70s) of R&D projects initiated and conducted by defense contractors independent of DoD control and without direct DoD funding. Nearly $3 billion worth of IR&D projects are submitted to DTIC annually. Accessible only to U.S. government organizations, the information is used to identify contractors with expertise in areas of interest to DoD and to avoid DoD duplication of industry R&D efforts.

STINET® Services — DTIC's flagship Scientific and Technical Information Network (STINET) is one of DoD's largest repositories of scientific and technical information currently available. There are three versions of the database:

Public STINET is available to the public, free of charge, and provides access to citations of unclassified, unlimited reports that describe the progress or results of research efforts and other scientific and technical information held by DTIC.

Private STINET is a password-protected, value-added service for individuals who have registered with DTIC. It offers online full-text versions of unclassified, unlimited, as well as limited documents.

Classified STINET is on the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) and contains the complete DTIC collection, including unclassified, limited reports and classified citations. In order to use this service you must be able to access the SIPRNET and have registered with DTIC.

STINET's MultiSearch is available in both Public and Private STINET and is a portal to the "deep" Web for government scientific and technical information. It searches below the "surface" Web for information not accessible through commercial and government search engines.

community) by the office that originates the document. The marking determines how and with whom the information can be shared.

DTIC's databases contain information marked to protect national security. Such classified information might be marked "Confidential" or "Secret." Some information, although not classified, is still sensitive for various reasons. These documents are marked to show why the information is sensitive and to whom the document can be distributed. These are "Unclassified, limited." Information that is neither classified nor limited can be released to the public. Information in DTIC's collection is composed of 41 percent unclassified, unlimited; 51 percent unclassified, limited; and 8 percent classified.

Where the Information Comes From

DTIC information is derived from many sources: DoD organizations (civilian and military) and DoD contractors; U.S. government organizations and their contractors; nonprofit organizations working on DoD scientific, research, and engineering activities; academia; and foreign governments.

Why provide DTIC with this information? First, it's the law—DoD Directive 3200.12—which is one pretty good reason. The directive mandates that DoD research, including that done in house and/or by contractors and grantees, should be part of the DTIC collection. In other words, if there is great technology in the DoD, DTIC should have that information for others to use and build upon.

However, once we get past "well, you have to," there are other reasons. DTIC gets information *from* the defense community, *for* the defense community, *about* defense and beyond. Having a full range of science and technology and research and development information within our collection ensures that technological innovations are linked to defense development and acquisition efforts. New research projects can begin with the highest level of information available. This, in turn, maximizes the use of DoD project dollars.

Goodbye Error 404

DTIC is committed to maintaining permanent availability of the information in its collection. How many times has this happened to you: Working against deadline, you go a Web site that has exactly the resource you need. You click on the link, and bam! (with apologies to chef Emeril Lagasse) you're on a dead page reading that dreaded "error 404" message.

Thanks to DTIC's Handle Service, <www.dtic.mil/dtic/handles>, that won't happen to you when you're searching our resources. What exactly is a handle? It's a permanent name for a digital object—a publication, article, or research paper. In other words, it provides long-term access to a digital resource. This relatively new service is already playing a vital role in the preservation of DoD Internet resources. Handles offer many benefits:

- Unlike URLs (uniform resource locators), they don't change, thereby ensuring that information will be available 24/7 over long periods of time.
- They act as a "seal of approval," created by publishers, that guarantees the authenticity of the resource.
- They help in the creation of accurate, live links within bibliographies and other research papers.

How We Support Our Customers

To help users get the most value from its resources, DTIC offers support and training:

- Customers can host a DTIC marketing brief or demonstration of its products and services at their location. For more information, e-mail bcporder@dtic.mil.
- Free training in searching DTIC's databases and handling DoD technical information is offered to all DTIC registered users at our headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va., and four regional offices in Boston, Mass.; Dayton, Ohio; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Los Angeles, Calif. Check <www.dtic.mil/dtic/training/index.html>.
- The annual Users' Meeting and Training Conference is held in the Washington, D.C. area in the spring; speakers from government, private industry, and DTIC address evolving information technologies. For more information visit <www.dtic.mil/dtic/annualconf/>.

Since 1999, DTIC has surveyed its registered users to gauge the level of satisfaction and identify areas for improvement. Survey results from 2004 indicated customer satisfaction with DTIC services as a whole. And how does DTIC stack up against other federal entities? Over the years, we have continued to exceed the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), the official service quality benchmark for the federal government. The December 2003 ACSI survey showed a government-wide customer satisfaction rating of 70.9 percent. DTIC's satisfaction score in our latest customer survey was 76 percent.

The Power of Information

DTIC puts DoD scientific and technical information into the hands of the "right" people in the defense community. In turn, the information ensures that existing research gets converted into the production of new, relevant, mature technology for use by warfighters, and it supports combatant commanders' strategic and tactical decisions—both essential as we fight the global war on terror.

The author welcomes comments and questions. Contact her at sschwalb@dtic.mil. For more information on DTIC, visit <www.dtic.mil>.