

Report by Hugo Rosemont on Lord West's address at the 2009 SBAC Annual Conference

This brief provides the author's notes of Lord West's keynote speech to the SBAC Annual Conference on 24 March 2009.

Summary of Points

- Good to see many old friends and members of RISC, including Alex Dorrian of Thales and Stephen Phipson of Smiths Detection;
- LW named and thanked the four Trade Associations in RISC;
- Credibility in SBAC terms - as Admiral he controlled more aircraft than BA;
- Space security elements are pushing ahead much better than 18 months ago;
- LW possesses broad responsibilities to the PM, including: CNI Protection; Preventing radicalisation; 2012 Security; Chairman of National Security Forum; LW also represents Home Office in House of Lords;
- Heavily involved in next iteration of National Security Strategy (NSS), expected for June 2009;
- CONTEST 2 just published. This "refreshment" is a pretty new document; the document retained the "4 Ps". The document is the best strategy for countering terrorism in the world;
- The United States Government is interested in learning from CONTEST 2;
- New developments in CONTEST 2:
 - Historical context in much more detail
 - More detail on CBRNE
 - Science and Technology treated more thoroughly
 - Links to industry are articulated
 - Addresses many more cross-cutting issues
- More to do with industry and not yet satisfied on developing its full potential;
- CONTEST 2 includes details that will be very useful to industry;
- Good progress on Disruption/Pursue agenda: HMG has doubled the size of the intelligence services and 3000 Special Branch officers are in place;
- Everyone should be proud of the UK agencies and the police services - we must not be complacent but they have been successful;
- CONTEST 2 treats the role of industry for the first time;
- Industry is needed to deliver science and technology;
- Government needs the conduit of RISC (SBAC/DMA/BSIA/Intellect);
- It "makes it a lot easier if we can use that route" (although not exclusive route);
- Very impressed by the capabilities of UK SMEs in the security market - they have cutting edge UK technologies;
- Trying to prioritise this aspect with UKTI DSO - & Lord West hopes there will be more dialogue between UKTI DSO and the OSCT;
- Hope that the previous image across Whitehall of industry only trying to sell things to Government is over;
- Disagreed with the SBAC's CNI Protection Policy Perspective. CPNI is doing good work; A lot more investment in CNI protection area; a CNI advisory group is in place; Tiger Tiger episode as good practice; whoever wrote it should speak with the Minister;
- The Defence Industry offers skill sets and other opportunities. (e.g. workforce, apprentices). The time is right to "push them now";
- National Security Strategy; version one was good but not fully developed;
 - At some point the Treasury will be considering NSS expenditure;
 - As the NSS develops how much of the budget will be shifted? (CT £3.5bn, Policing £12bn). Expenditure will be considered within the totality of "security";
 - The Minister might expect a shift in investment to the broader security agenda. Looking globally this is probably going to be a growth market;
- Despite these uncertain times, Lord West is very impressed with the Defence and Aerospace Industry;
- Huge block orders are however going to become more difficult;
- On Heathrow, he said that the Government had consulted at length. Decision was not made lightly. Very complex decision, balancing many factors:

Economic, competition with other airports, Business, environmental, alternative modes of transport, local issues. He then mentioned some of the key issues within the decision:

- Heathrow's runways run at 99% capacity, compared with 75% at Paris, Frankfurt and Amsterdam;
- Running at 99% means that small incidents, such as fog, have disproportionate effects on Heathrow;
- The 3rd Runway will create jobs in the UK from building and operating the facilities;
- It will attract jobs to the UK, attracting global companies to locate their European headquarters in the UK;
- The net benefit, considering all factors is £5 billion;
- The position on noise will in fact improve: by 2030 the number of people affected at 57dBA or higher will have fallen by over 20%;
- He also mentioned that the Government recognises that times are difficult for business. BERR providing help for business, including:
 - Enterprise Finance Guarantee;
 - Asset Protection Scheme;
 - Capital for Enterprise Fund;
 - Working Capital Scheme;
 - RDA transition loan funds;
 - Prompt Payment Code;
- Also said that Aerospace and Defence markets run on longer cycle times:
 - Longer time from interest to order;
 - Longer time from order to delivery;
 - Examples: CVF, FCA, FSTA, Skynet 5;
- He listed skills that can be redeployed within companies without excessive difficulty: e.g. systems, hardware, software, and materials;
- He mentioned the Institute of Knowledge Transfer (IKT) and its President, Sir Brian Fender;
- He encouraged industry to collaborate more with Universities.

ENDS

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