



ARSAG '04

Founder's Message & Conference Minutes



More than three hundred members of the United States and International aerial refueling community attended ARSAG '04 in Jacksonville FL. The conference General Assembly was convened on Tuesday morning, 4 May. **Captain John Scanlan**, U.S. Navy, Executive Officer, NAVAIR Depot Jacksonville welcomed ARSAG to Jacksonville. **Maj Gen Michael Gould**, HQ USAF/XOX, Director of Operational Plans and Joint Matters, Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations, delivered the keynote address, sharing his experiences and insight. **Maj Gen Mark A. Pillar**, U.S. Strategic Command, Joint USSTRATCOM staff, was guest speaker. ARSAG also was honored by the participation of **Brig Gen John T. Brennan**, US Air Force, serving with the NATO RFAS.

On Monday, 3 May, ARSAG was honored to host the NATO standardization panel meeting and the EACC working group panel meeting. They constituted an ideal symbiosis with the ARSAG conference. These independent meetings will continue to be a part of the ARSAG conference week. Together with ARSAG's special topics/projects efforts, these meetings work to benefit aerial refueling and tanker/receiver interoperability.

This year's ARSAG conference was organized around three central objectives: 1) enhanced aerial refueling interoperability; 2) advanced aerial refueling development; and 3) improved maintenance.

In regard to the first objective, ARSAG is working toward enhanced aerial refueling standardization of both aerial refueling hardware and equipment and of aerial refueling procedures as identified in STANAG 3971, ATP-56 and STANAG 3447a. ARSAG's conferences and communication with appropriate international organizations are key to achieving this objective. Another priority is methods, procedures and points-of-contact for assuring the rapid and most efficient method for the tanker and receiver clearance process. A proposed consolidated, centralized repository for aerial refueling tanker/receiver clearance documents and technical documents will allow easy access to vital aerial refueling information. At the Jacksonville conference, initial steps toward these objectives were taken, exceeding expectations. Cooperation in these vital matters was exemplary. Outstanding briefings in the Interoperability Panel session illustrated the current disparities in aerial refueling equipment and procedures and the need for standardization. Topical briefings pointed to current and proposed standardization tools and methods. Analogous to the achievement of this objective were the special topic/project meetings discussions of ARSAG documents including the Performance and Interface Survey, Pressure Definitions and Aerial Refueling Clearance Process.

The second objective regarding advanced aerial refueling development in support of both existing and future manned and unmanned aircraft was advanced by the outstanding, comprehensive briefings given in both the Advanced Concepts Panel and the System Design Panel sessions during the conference general assembly.

The third objective, identifying the critical nature of aerial refueling components and systems and the need for proper and frequent maintenance, was discussed in enlightening briefings during the Reliability and Maintainability session during the conference general assembly.

ARSAG's tradition of open forum communications was continued in special meetings and in timely, informative briefings during the general assembly in the Interoperability, Safety, Studies and Analysis, Test and Evaluation, Operations, Training and Industry Panels' sessions.

Mr. Ralph Crosby, Chairman and CEO, EADS North America, addressed the assembly and welcomed the conference to the Awards Luncheon sponsored by EADS on Tuesday. Awards for service to ARSAG and to the aerial refueling community were presented to individuals who had made special contributions and/or who now are leaving ARSAG due to retirement or re-assignment to new positions. They included: Peter Turner, Flight Refuelling Ltd.; Chuck Clark, Parker-Hannifin; Lt Col Tom Swiderek, NATO, US Air Force; Maj Pedro Sipols, NATO, Spanish Air Force; Julien Ferté, EADS;

David Foulger, Flight Refuelling Ltd.; Gerald Montgomery, US Air Force, OC/ALC; Robert Tacher, US Navy, NAVAIR Depot, Jacksonville; Ralph Aviles, US Navy, NAVAIR Depot, Jacksonville; Lt Col Rick Boyer, US Navy Safety Center; Roger Kilford, Qinetiq Ltd.; Col Cathy Clothier, US Air Force, 319th Operations Group; Darrel Monday, US Navy, NAVAIR Depot, Jacksonville; Volker Stellisch, German Air Force; and Capt Christoff Mueller, German Air Force. Rich Kahler of Boeing accepted a posthumous award to John Buckland on behalf of Joy Buckland.

ARSAG is indebted to these outstanding individuals for the time and energy they have dedicated to ARSAG and for their contributions to aerial refueling. Peter Turner served on ARSAG's Board of Trustees and has been a major supporter and ally of ARSAG. Chuck Clark has been a long time participant in ARSAG, served on the Board and supported ARSAG through sponsorship of the organization's directory. Lt Col Tom Swiderek has been an exceptionally valuable leader in ARSAG for the past several years, working many ARSAG and aerial refueling issues, including interoperability. Julien Ferte was a dedicated member of ARSAG's Board. Maj Pedro Sipols has expended his valuable time and energy in service of ARSAG, particularly in coordination with NATO standardization. David Foulger ably served as an Advanced Concepts Panel Chair for many years; he will be missed. Gerald Montgomery's long and excellent service as Reliability and Maintainability Panel Chair will be hard to match; he has been with ARSAG for so long that it is hard to imagine ARSAG without him. John Buckland established ARSAG's web site, managed the audio visual presentations at conferences and assembled the conference minutes CD's; his passing has left a void in ARSAG. Other awardees served as Panel Chairs, Steering Group members and in other capacities within ARSAG. The mention of a few of the ways in which the awardees were active in ARSAG does not begin to give full value to the contributions of all of them to the organization and to the aerial refueling community.

A Tuesday evening reception on the Adam's Mark deck overlooking the St. John's River included live music and refreshments and allowed conference attendees to new renew old acquaintances and to meet the many new participants in ARSAG.

Special topics/projects meetings were held on Monday, 3 May and on Friday 7 May. At noon on Thursday, the conference General Session was adjourned.

On Thursday afternoon, a tour to the Jacksonville Naval Air Depot offered conference attendees an opportunity to visit a working facility. We are grateful to the NAVAIR people who facilitated the tour.

The ARSAG '04 exhibit area was filled with attractive and informative displays mounted by industries active in aerial refueling.

I wish to express my appreciation to the exceptional presenters who made the conference one of the most interesting, timely and productive in ARSAG's twenty-six year history. ARSAG's Panel Chairs, experts in their fields, and ARSAG's Steering Group, representatives of their US and international military organizations, have earned our gratitude and recognition for their work in planning the conference. Robert Tacher deserves special appreciation for his contributions to the success of ARSAG '04 in identifying the Jacksonville conference venue, working with the hotel, assisting with audio-visual and arranging and leading the Jacksonville Naval Air Depot tour. We are particularly grateful to David Sly who stepped in to pick up the responsibilities of web master, manage the audio-visual presentations for the conference and compile the CD record of the briefings. We appreciate Lt Col Rick Boyer's picking up extra duties at the last minute. Special thanks are due the ARSAG Board of Directors. ARSAG is indebted to all those who contributed in the planning, registration and administration for the Jacksonville conference.

We plan to build on the success of ARSAG '04. I look forward to ARSAG '05 and to seeing you there.

Best Regards,

Dex Kalt