

2025 Space Contracting Executive Forum Agenda <i>From Paper to Propulsion: Empowering 21st Century Guardians Through Smart Procurement</i> Thursday, September 11 , BR-DGE, 777 Aviation Blvd, El Segundo CA, Moderator: Captain Derique Palmer	
8:30am-9:00am	Check-In
9:00am-9:15am	Welcome: Ms. Natalie Riedel, Director of Contracting, Space Systems Command
9:15am-9:45am	Keynote: Col Steve Medeiros, Commander, System Delta 84, Space System Command
9:45am-10:30am	Keynote: Gokul Subramanian (Anduril, Senior Vice President of Engineering)
10:30am-10:45am	Break
10:45am-11:45pm	<p>From Proposal to Award: Optimizing the RFP Process (Panel Discussion) <i>This discussion explores the contrasting approaches government and industry take toward RFPs, highlighting resource investments, misaligned priorities, and practical ways to improve efficiency and outcomes for all stakeholders.</i></p> <p>Moderator: 1st Lieutenant Heeyeun Joo</p> <p>Panel Members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lieutenant Colonel Col Douglas Downs (Material Leader, Mission Procurement Branch) 2. Mr. Kevin Hobbs (SSC/AAK, Chief of Contracting) 3. Ms. LaCinda Gansert (ULA, Sr. Manager, Acquisitions, Contracts & Subcontracts) 4. Ms. Caitlin Smith (SpaceX, Director, Government Program Development) 5. Mr. Dave McFarland (Varda Industries, Vice President Hypersonic and Reentry Test)
11:45am-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm-1:30pm	SpaceWERX: Lieutenant Colonel Vinny Pande (Material Leader, SpaceWerx)
1:30pm-2:30pm	<p>Propelling Procurement: Agile Paths to Space Innovation (Panel Discussion) <i>This discussion will deep dive into bold contracting frontiers — from CSOs and OTAs to SBIRs and Prize Challenges — as we tackle gaps head-on, spark inventive solutions, and showcase real-world breakthroughs already reshaping the career field</i></p> <p>Moderator: Captain Byron Irving</p> <p>Panel Members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Erik Symanski, (AFICC/KS, Director of Contracting) 2. Mr. Ronald Ortiz (SSC/SNK, Chief of Contracting) 3. Colonel John Travieso (Air Force Test Center, Director of Contracting) 4. Mr. Eric Mahowald (SSC/CMK, Chief of Contracting) 5. Mr. Henry Shen (SSC/PKA, Chief of Contracting)
2:30pm – 3:00PM	<p>From compliance to Capability - Rewiring Government and Industry Culture for Digital Acquisition: Dr. Jason Womack, Strategist, Leader Development for Operational Readiness, Space Systems Command (SSC)</p> <p>Dr. Womack a leading practitioner in the defense acquisition space shares proven strategies and insights for transforming legacy, compliance-heavy cultures into agile organizations ready to tackle 21st century problems</p>
3:00pm-3:15pm	Forum Wrap-Up: Ms. Natalie Riedel, Director of Contracting, Space Systems Command
3:15pm-6:00PM	Social Held After Forum Wrap-Up at BR-DGE

agenda is subject to change