



# News Release

## Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

*"Providing technological innovation for  
national security for over 40 years."*

3701 North Fairfax Drive  
Arlington, VA 22203-1714

---

---

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2005

### **DIRECTOR OF J-UCAS PROGRAM HONORED BY AEROSPACE AND ENGINEERING COMMUNITIES**

Dr. Michael S. Francis, director of the Joint Unmanned Air Combat Systems (J-UCAS) program, has received the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics' (AIAA) 2005 Distinguished Service Award. He was also recently presented the University of Colorado's Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award.

The AIAA Board of Directors established the Distinguished Service Award in 1968 to give unique recognition to an individual member of AIAA who has provided distinguished service to the Institute. Francis was honored for leadership in the growth and development of the aerospace industry and his participation in and chairing of many AIAA committees. The award was presented to Francis at the AIAA Aerospace Spotlight Gala on May 11, 2005, at the Grand Hyatt in Washington, D.C.

The Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award (DEAA) program was initiated in 1966 with the dedication of the University of Colorado's Engineering Center to honor the university's most distinguished engineers and applied scientists. Francis was honored for his engineering work in the field of government service and was presented with the award at the University of Colorado's Engineering Awards Banquet on April 22, 2005, in Boulder, Colo.

Francis has served as the Director of the J-UCAS program since the office was stood up in October 2003. J-UCAS is a joint Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)/U.S. Air Force/U.S. Navy effort to demonstrate the technical feasibility, military utility, and operational value of a networked system of high-performance, weaponized, unmanned air vehicles to effectively and affordably execute combat missions.

This is Francis' second assignment at DARPA, as he previously served as a program manager directing the X-31 and Micro Air Vehicle programs during his active duty Air Force career. In 1994, he launched DARPA's Unmanned Tactical Aircraft program, the precursor to today's J-UCAS program. Francis also led the development of the Defense Department's first integrated air-space surveillance architecture at the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office, and managed several space system development programs for the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center and the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization.

(more)

After retiring as a Colonel from the Air Force in 1997, Francis founded and was first president of Athena Technologies Inc. Before heading the J-UCAS program at DARPA, Francis was Director of Technical Integration, Corporate Engineering and Technology at Lockheed Martin.

Francis is a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and is winner of the 1995 National Air and Space Museum Trophy and the *Aviation Week & Space Technology* Laurels Award.

*DARPA is the central research and development organization for the U.S. Department of Defense. Its primary responsibility is to help maintain technological superiority for the U.S. military and to guard against unforeseen technological advances by potential adversaries. It has an annual budget of approximately \$3 billion, managed by 150 program managers. The Agency was founded in 1958, and, over the years, has been responsible for advances in computer networking (DARPA created the ARPANET, the predecessor to today's Internet), advanced materials, ballistic missile defense, space launch vehicles, information processing, advanced computer displays, and many other areas.*

-END-

Media with questions, please contact Johanna Spangenberg at (202) 289-2001.