

Cape Canaveral, FL | March 10 - 11, 2026

# COLLABORATION ON QUALITY

## IN THE SPACE AND DEFENSE INDUSTRIES FORUM

# Embracing Quality Excellence:

A Foundation for Stability  
and Success in an  
Unpredictable  
World

33rd Annual  
*cqsd*



Presented by



Aviation, Space &  
Defense Division  
Excellence Through Quality™

In collaboration with

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
- Department of War (DOW)
- Missile Defense Agency (MDA)
- Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)



**cqsd**i

COLLABORATION ON QUALITY IN THE SPACE AND DEFENSE INDUSTRIES

## Embracing Quality Excellence...

*A Foundation for Stability and Success  
in an Unpredictable World*

**March 10-11, 2026 | Radisson at the Port**  
8701 Astronaut Boulevard, Cape Canaveral, FL  
800-333-3333 or 321-784-0000

Presented by  
ASQ Aviation, Space & Defense Division

In collaboration with  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA),  
Department of War (DOW),  
Missile Defense Agency (MDA),  
and Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)

This forum will be your most important and rewarding professional experience for 2026! It includes keynote and featured speakers, panel presentations, and workshops. Government and industry leaders will discuss the latest policies and practices that will directly affect your organization.

**Format for 2026** includes different training/workshops in parallel with the panels. All participants will be able to attend the keynote and featured speakers, but for the workshops, attendees would need to select either a panel discussion or the parallel training session, as they are concurrent sessions.

**ASQ Recertification Units (RUs)** may be claimed for this event. A recertification letter is available upon request at the registration desk.



**Aviation, Space &  
Defense Division**  
Excellence Through Quality™

## CQSDI Committee

*\*CQSDI Executive Planning Committee*

- \*Phil Montag**, KBR (CQSDI Chair)
- \*Amy Peters**, Northrop Grumman (ASQ ASD Division Chair)
- \*Belinda Chavez**, KBR (ASQ ASD Division Immediate Past Chair)
- \*Jerri Ji**, Sterling Quality Management (ASQ ASD Div. Past Chair)
- \*Ed Jopson**, CQSDI Past Chair
- \*Mike Swenson**, ASD/CQSDI Past Chair
- Craig Bennett**, DCMA
- Don Brandl**, NASA HQ
- David Campbell**, NASA Retired
- Doug Cartney**, Northrop Grumman (Industry Co-Chair)
- Stephen Cassman**, Lockheed Martin
- Pete Checklick**, NASA (Retired)
- Paul Chiodo**, Universal Technical Resource Services
- Lisa Fenton**, Past Industry Co-Chair
- Jennifer Fischer-Darby**, JHU APL
- Yvette Harris**, PPG Aerospace
- Michael Kelly**, Quality Assurance Risk Management Services (QARMS)
- Isabelle Labbe**, NASA Kennedy Space Center
- Shannon Marsh**, Show Me Quality Consulting (SMQC)
- Rob Pollard**, L3Harris Technologies
- Rick Roelecke**, BAE Systems
- Greg Romans**, MDA
- Amber Rowson**, Show Me Quality Consulting (SMQC)
- Brian J. Tenney**, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics
- Clementine Uwineza**, RTX
- James Wade**, Engineering & Mission Assurance Leader
- Michael Walker**, Boeing
- Nicole Wendt**, Northrop Grumman
- Fred Williams**, SQA



# Message from the Chair

Welcome to the 2026 CQSDI



## Phil Montag

VP, Human Performance and Research Division, KBR (CQSDI Chair)

Thank you all for joining us for CQSDI 2026. This is our 33rd year, and we are excited to once again bring together professionals from across the spectrum of industry and quality to engage, collaborate, and explore our ever-evolving world of Quality.

Our event theme is ***Embracing Quality Excellence: A Foundation for Stability and Success in an Unpredictable World***. Today we are operating in a world where we wake up daily to impactful changes, making it an ongoing challenge to assess their implications and mitigate emerging risks. The impact of DOGE is just one of the many changes in our operational environments as we experience the immediate loss of staff on both the employee and customer vectors. With these often immediate and unexpected departures we lose a lot of the historical knowledge embedded in these individuals. This year, we will have a panel addressing strategies for managing the loss of historical knowledge due to staff departures. Continuing with impactful issues of today,

we have a panel on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on Quality. These are just two of the many relevant topics we will cover over the next two days. In addition to the panels and workshops, take a look at the exceptional business leaders that are speaking from Space Force, NASA, DCMA, Missile Defense, ASQ, and aerospace companies.

Beyond the program content, this forum offers outstanding opportunities for professional and interpersonal networking! I sincerely appreciate all of you who traveled to participate in person and hope you take full advantage of the chance to reconnect with colleagues and build new relationships.

As always, our goal is to provide a forum where leaders and professionals across our dynamic work environments can collaborate and learn how peers are adapting to the challenges we all face. I am fortunate to have a strong committee of dedicated professionals supporting this event. Please take a moment to review the exceptional members of our CQSDI Planning Committee listed inside the cover of this program. If you have any questions, feel free to ask them or provide direct feedback on your experience. We continually incorporate your input to improve this event and look forward to hearing from you over the next two days.



7:00 - 8:00am **Registration/Continental Breakfast**

8:00 - 8:15am **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Amy Peters**, Sr. Director of S&MA, Northrop Grumman, (ASQ ASD Division Chair)  
**Phil Montag**, VP, Human Performance & Research Division, KBR, (CQSDI Chair)

8:15 - 8:45am **Keynote Speaker: Frank Groen**, Deputy Chief, NASA's Office of Safety & Mission Assurance

8:45 - 9:15am **Featured Speaker: Adaora Nelson**, VP of Quality & Mission Assurance, RTX

9:15 - 9:30am --- **BREAK** ---

9:30 - 11:45am **Session 1 (Attend a Panel or Workshop)**

● **Session 1 Panel**

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) Impact on Quality**

**Stephen Cassman**, Sr. Supplier Quality Engineer, Lockheed Martin, (Panel Moderator)  
**Trevor Sands**, Staff AI Engineer, AI Factory, Lockheed Martin Artificial Intelligence Center (LAIC)  
**Jordan Hyatt**, Staff Data Scientist Analyst, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics  
**Eric Jefferies**, President, International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG)  
**John Serrano**, Chief Mission Assurance Engineer, Northrop Grumman

● **Session 1A Workshop**

**Views/Perspectives on Partnering with Supply Chain**

**Rick Roelecke**, Sr. Engineering Manager, BAE Systems  
**Jacob Golden**, Quality Assurance Specialist, DCMA  
**Amber Weaver**, Quality Manager, Ross Machine

● **Session 1B Workshop**

**Managing Multiple Quality Risks**

**Keith Horbatuck**, Quality Director of Integration, Test, & Delivery, Lockheed Martin Space  
**Craig Bennett**, NASA Program Manager, DCMA HQ  
**Rob Pollard**, Director of Space Systems Quality, L3Harris Technologies, SAS Segment  
**Brian Tenney**, Director of Sustainment Quality, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

11:45 - 1:00pm --- **LUNCH** ---

1:00 - 1:30pm **Luncheon Featured Speaker: Sid Bhatnagar**, CEO, ASQ

1:30 - 1:45pm --- **Transition to General Session** ---

1:45 - 2:15pm **Keynote Speaker: Marisela Reyes**, VP of Total Quality, Boeing

2:15 - 2:30pm --- **BREAK** ---

2:30 - 4:45pm **Session 2 (Attend a Panel or Workshop)**

● **Session 2 Panel**

**Navigating Supply Chain Chaos: Mitigating Risks and Adapting to Regulatory Changes**

**Clementine Uwineza**, Corporate Supplier Quality Lead, RTX, (Panel Moderator)  
**Rick Roelecke**, Sr. Engineering Manager, BAE Systems  
**Rob Zifer**, Director of Corporate Supplier Quality, Northrop Grumman  
**Matthew Dowling**, Director of CORE Operating System, RTX

● **Session 2A Workshop**

**What's New with Industry Standards**

**Leslie McKay**, Director of Digital Standards Development, SAE  
**Doug Cartney**, Corporate Director of Quality & Mission Assurance, Northrop Grumman  
**Brian Geer**, Compliance Manager, Lockheed Martin  
**Greg Fontaine**, IAQG Digital Focal, Principal, Jaspin Interactive & GridNexus

● **Session 2B Workshop**

**Building a Quality-Driven Roadmap for Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)**

**Jennifer Fischer-Darby**, SES/SMA Group Supervisor, JHU/APL  
**Shannon Marsh**, Deputy Program Manager, Supply Chain Risk Management Strategist, SMQC

5:00 - 7:00pm **Networking Reception**

Sponsored by: **ASQ-ASD, Deltek and Northrop Grumman**

**7:00 - 8:00am Registration/Continental Breakfast**

**8:00 - 8:15am Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**Phil Montag**, VP, Human Performance & Research Division, KBR, (CQSDI Chair)

**8:15 - 8:45am Keynote Speaker: John Steinmeyer**, Director of Engineering for the Space Access Directorate, Space Systems Command, U.S. Space Force

**8:45 - 9:15am Featured Speaker: Michael Guymon**, President & CEO, SQA Services

**9:15 - 9:30am --- BREAK ---**

**9:30 - 11:45am Session 3 (Attend a Panel or Workshop)**

**Session 3 Panel**

**Executive Order Check-In**

**Amber Rowson**, President & CEO, Show Me Quality Consulting, (Panel Moderator)

**Tim White**, VP of Engineering & Technology, AIA

**Nick Dolan**, Manufacturing Team Lead, Sr. Product Specialist, Deltek TIP Technologies

**Rocky Khullar**, Sr. Project Engineer, The Aerospace Corporation

**Session 3A Workshop**

**Knowledge Transfer - Building Workforce Capability Resilience**

**Jane Loda**, Dean of Quality Engineering, Pratt & Whitney

**Belinda Chavez**, SA3 Operations Manager, SAN SMA Manager, KBR

**Jerri Ji**, President, Sterling Quality Management

**Session 3B Workshop**

**Achieving an Effective Quality & Safety Culture**

**Jim Wade**, Engineering & Mission Assurance Leader

**Yvette Harris**, Sr. Quality Leader, PPG Aerospace

**Glenn Blazek**, Instructional Design & Systems Engineering Training Specialist

**Doug Cartney**, Corporate Director of Quality & Mission Assurance, Northrop Grumman

**11:45 - 1:00pm --- LUNCH ---**

**1:00 - 1:30pm Luncheon Featured Speaker: Sonya Ebright**, Deputy Director, DCMA

**1:30 - 1:45pm Transition to General Session**

**1:45 - 2:15pm Featured Speakers:**

**Bart Kemper**, Principal Engineer, Kemper Engineering Services

**Krista Kemper**, President, Kemper Engineering Services

**2:15 - 2:30pm --- BREAK ---**

**2:30 - 4:45pm Session 4 (Attend a Workshop)**

**Session 4A Workshop**

**Lessons Lost: Why History Repeats and How to Break the Cycle**

**Ann Over**, Founder and Principal, AR NexGen

**Ledlyne Vazquez**, Branch Chief for Systems Engineering & Integration, NASA KSC

**Michael Bell**, Chief Knowledge Officer & NASA Lessons Learned Program Manager, NASA KSC

**Aaron Morris**, Parachute Integration Group Manager, Safety Division, NASA KSC

**Session 4B Workshop**

**Communicating the Importance of Quality to Leadership**

**Nicole Wendt**, Quality & Mission Assurance Manager, Northrop Grumman

**Clementine Uwineza**, Corporate Supplier Quality Lead, RTX

**Session 4C Workshop**

**Engineering Quality Across the Aerospace Lifecycle**

**Walter Stefan**, Aerospace Executive, Board Member, and Industry Advisor

**Michael Guymon**, President & CEO, SQA Services

**Thibault Jongen**, CEO & Finance, Common Sense Robotics



8:00 - 8:15 am

**Welcome & Opening Remarks****Amy Peters**

Sr. Director of Safety & Mission Assurance,  
Northrop Grumman (ASQ ASD Division Chair)

**Phil Montag**

VP, Human Performance and Research Division,  
KBR (CQSDI Chair)

8:15 - 8:45 am

**Keynote Speaker****Frank Groen**

Deputy Chief, NASA's Office of  
Safety and Mission Assurance

**Dr. Frank J. Groen** is the deputy chief of NASA's Office of Safety and Mission Assurance (OSMA). In this role, he provides executive leadership, policy direction, functional management, and coordination for agency-wide program and institutional Safety and Mission Assurance (SMA) activities.

Before becoming OSMA deputy chief, Dr. Groen served as director of the Safety and Assurance Requirements Division, where he oversaw the development and maintenance of NASA directives and standards related to SMA, along with associated methods, tools, and guidance.

Earlier in his OSMA tenure, Dr. Groen managed Reliability and Maintainability (R&M) and served as document manager for NASA's Human-Rating Directive and program executive for the Expendable Launch Vehicle Payload Safety Program. During this period, he introduced the safety-goal policy for human spaceflight missions into the Human-Rating Directive, oversaw the development of an accident-precursor analysis methodology for NASA, and initiated an objectives-driven approach to standardizing R&M activities.

Dr. Groen also completed a detail as acting deputy associate administrator for Integration, Strategy, and Transformation within the NASA Mission Support Directorate, returning in April 2025 to resume his current role as OSMA deputy chief.

Dr. Groen earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in reliability engineering from the University of Maryland in 2000 and a Master of Science degree in mechanical engineering from Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands.

8:45 - 9:15 am

**Featured Speaker****Adaora Nelson**

Vice President of Quality and  
Mission Assurance, RTX

**Dr. Adaora Nelson** is the vice president of Quality and Mission Assurance for Raytheon, a business of RTX specializing in integrated air and missile defense, advanced sensors, space-based systems, hypersonics, and effectors. She leads all aspects of Quality and Mission Assurance, ensuring the integration of quality throughout the business. She also oversees Raytheon's CORE operating system, driving strategic alignment, execution of goals and initiatives, process maturation, and continuous improvement.

A Navy veteran, Dr. Nelson brings more than two decades of experience across Quality, Operations, General Management, Supply Chain, Program Management, and regulatory compliance. She has held multiple leadership roles within Raytheon, including vice president of Quality and Product Safety, chief of staff to the president, and executive director of Operations Quality.

Before joining the company in 2019, Dr. Nelson served as vice president, COO, and general manager of Safran Electronics and Defense, USA. She also held several leadership positions at Parker Aerospace.

Dr. Nelson holds a Ph.D. in engineering and technology management from Northcentral University, a master's degree in engineering management from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and a bachelor's degree in electronics systems from Southern Illinois University.



9:30 - 11:45 am

## SESSION 1 PANEL

### Artificial Intelligence (AI) Impact on Quality

**Abstract:** The increasing use of AI and machine learning (ML) in various industries is transforming the quality landscape. This panel explores how AI is reshaping quality assurance in aerospace through three presentations. Trevor Sands will open with an introduction to key AI concepts, an overview of aerospace-specific risks, and a discussion of core AI-governance principles grounded in the NIST AI Risk Management Framework and ISO/IEC 42001. His presentation will be followed by a live Q&A with all panelists.

Participants will then choose between two breakout sessions for a deeper dive into either prompt engineering or real-world case studies:

**Case-Study Session** (w/ Eric Jefferies and Jordan Hyatt): Demonstrations of AI applications, including IAQG's OASIS analytics platform for predictive supplier insights and Lockheed Martin's AI-driven analysis of technical publications to accelerate MRO risk identification.

**Prompt-Engineering Workshop** (w/ John Serrano): An interactive, hands-on session showing how natural-language prompts can be transformed into repeatable, audit-ready root-cause analyses, PFMEA studies, and defect-detection workflows.

Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of AI governance, real-world use cases, and practical skills they can apply immediately.

## Session 1 - Panel Moderator Stephen Cassman

Sr. Supplier Quality Engineer,  
Lockheed Martin Aeronautics

**Mr. Stephen Cassman** is a Senior Supplier Quality Engineer within Lockheed Martin's Aeronautics Supplier Quality Integration organization. He has more than eight years of experience supporting aviation, space, and defense programs in roles spanning quality, logistics, and manufacturing.

Mr. Cassman takes pride in supporting the warfighter, having served in the U.S. Marine Corps (2010-2014) as an Aviation Support Equipment Mechanic. He currently serves as Treasurer for ASQ's Aviation,

Space and Defense Division. He holds an M.S. in Manufacturing Management from Southern Methodist University and a B.S. in Supply Chain and Logistics Technology from the University of Houston.

## Session 1 - Panelist 1 Governance of Modern AI Systems in Quality Assurance

**Abstract (Trevor Sands):** Trevor Sands will provide an overview of the emerging AI landscape for quality professionals, beginning with core artificial intelligence concepts and the specific risks associated with modern AI use in aerospace. He will then examine how AI is being integrated into the defense industry and outline the essential components of robust AI governance - including security, assurance, and effective human-machine teaming - through the lens of the NIST AI Risk Management Framework and the ISO/IEC 42001 standard for AI Management Systems. By embedding disciplined AI governance, organizations can advance quality excellence as a foundation for long-term stability and success.

### Trevor Sands

Staff AI Engineer, AI Factory, Lockheed Martin  
Artificial Intelligence Center (LAIC)

**Mr. Trevor Sands** is a Staff AI Engineer at Lockheed Martin's AI Center. He has more than a decade of experience in artificial intelligence, machine learning, autonomous systems, software development, and project management.

Since 2021, Mr. Sands has been leading elements of Lockheed Martin's AI Security strategy to ensure intelligent systems are safe, secure, and trustworthy. He also serves on the AI Ethics Subcommittee and has contributed to corporate-wide standards for the ethical development and use of AI.

Mr. Sands earned a B.S. in Electrical Engineering with a concentration in Robotics from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 2014 and an M.S. in Computer Science with a concentration in Artificial Intelligence from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2022.



## Session 1 - Panelists 2 & 3

### AI Uses Impacting Quality: From OASIS Data to MRO Knowledge Mining

#### **Abstract (Jordan Hyatt & Eric Jefferies):**

Eric Jefferies will present IAQG's AI-powered analytics platform, which interprets OASIS (Online Aerospace Supplier Information System) data to deliver predictive insights that inform future standards and drive immediate quality improvements for suppliers and manufacturers. Jordan Hyatt will complement this by explaining how Lockheed Martin leverages AI to analyze large, complex technical publications, enabling rapid risk identification and more efficient MRO (maintenance, repair, and overhaul) support for military operations to ensure quality.

#### **Jordan Hyatt**

Staff Data Scientist Analyst, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, Advanced Quality and Digital Technologies (AQDT)

**Mr. Jordan Hyatt** is a data science professional and military veteran with 16 years of combined experience, having served in roles including Data Scientist, Business Intelligence Analyst, Operations Team Leader, and Army Officer. He has spent most of his career in the aerospace sector and has also conducted academic research, holding an advanced degree in physics from New York University.

Mr. Hyatt specializes in Python software development and contributes significantly to the rapidly growing fields of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and predictive analytics.

#### **Eric Jefferies**

President,  
International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG)

**Mr. Eric Jefferies** is the President of IAQG, the globally recognized leader in delivering standards and tools that enable aviation, space, and defense organizations to enhance performance, mitigate risks, and strengthen stakeholder confidence. He was appointed President in 2023 after serving as Chair of the Americas Aerospace Quality Group, where he successfully led multiple sector and international subteams within IAQG.

With more than 24 years of experience at Bell Textron Inc., Mr. Jefferies has held leadership roles in Quality Assurance, Corporate Compliance, Government Property, and Quality Inspection. He also spent three years as Head of Corporate Quality for Allied Electronics, Inc. He holds an MBA from Texas Christian University and a BBA from LeTourneau University.

## Session 1 - Panelist 4

### Prompt-Engineering: Innovative Quality Approaches Leveraging AI Technologies

**Abstract (John Serrano):** John Serrano will demonstrate how prompt engineering enables quality professionals to harness AI-driven tools for root-cause analysis, PFMEA, 5-Whys, and cause-and-effect diagrams - turning natural-language queries into precise, repeatable results that accelerate inspection and defect detection. Through simulated aerospace case studies, such as cable-assembly error reduction and drawing-review bottlenecks, he will show how AI-generated prompts support collaboration, audit-ready documentation, and compliant data handling. Leveraging low-code prompt engineering empowers participants to advance quality excellence today.

#### **John Serrano**

Chief Mission Assurance Engineer,  
Northrop Grumman Corporation Space Systems

**Mr. John Serrano** earned a Master's in Systems Engineering and a Bachelor's in Industrial Engineering from the University of Alabama in Huntsville. With more than 26 years of experience in engineering and mission assurance, he currently serves as a Senior Staff Mission Assurance Engineer at Northrop Grumman. He has held key technical and leadership roles - including Reliability, Safety, Quality, Software Quality, and Chief Mission Assurance Engineer - focused on improving human-machine systems and optimizing processes.

Mr. Serrano holds active ASQ certifications in Reliability, Quality, Six Sigma Black Belt, and Supplier Quality, and is an AS9100, ISO 9001, and CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration) auditor. He has been an active contributor to the quality community, serving as Chair of the ASQ Huntsville Section and presenting at the ASQ World Conference and Lean Six Sigma conferences.



9:30 - 11:45 am

## SESSION 1A WORKSHOP

### Views/Perspectives on Partnering with Supply Chain

**Abstract:** This Knowledge-Sharing and Discussion Forum explores the relationship between “government customers” and suppliers” - a relationship that can sometimes feel tense or overly focused on auditing and oversight rather than true partnership. Many suppliers face multiple QMS audits from various customers, each with different expectations and outcomes, often leaving them overwhelmed by requirements while trying to maintain consistent operations, profitability, and competitiveness.

This workshop will examine how government organizations can better partner with the supplier community through requirements education, collaborative “evaluations” rather than traditional “audits,” and by recognizing where suppliers may need support or relief. This fully interactive session invites open dialogue among all attendees and our guest panel, offering an opportunity to explore a wide range of supply-chain topics.

Please note that this session is strictly a collaborative discussion - there will be no PowerPoint presentations from panelists. Any materials provided will serve only as prompts to spark open-forum conversations within the broader theme of Supplier Evaluation. Attendees should come prepared to actively participate.

This format enables a facilitated, free-flowing exchange of ideas to address common challenges, share insights, and generate practical solutions. Participants will benefit from “quick hits” on timely issues and leave with actionable takeaways from both the panel and their peers.

#### **Rick Roeleck**

Sr. Engineering Manager, Supplier Assurance, Enterprise Assurance & Integrated Supply Chain, BAE Space and Mission Systems (SMS)

**Mr. Rick Roeleck** is the Senior Engineering Manager of Supplier Assurance at BAE SMS, a provider of instruments, payloads, and satellites for national defense and civil space missions. BAE SMS also supports a wide range of warfighter programs through advanced antenna, sensor, and infrared technology solutions. In his role, he leads the Supplier Assurance organization,

which is responsible for ensuring the successful execution of supplier mission and quality-assurance requirements, including comprehensive Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM).

Mr. Roeleck has presented at various ASQ, NASA, and industry conferences - including CQSDI, the Goddard Supply Chain Conference, the NASA Quality Leadership Forum (QLF), and CALCE - on a variety of mission-assurance and quality topics. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electronic Engineering and a Master of Business Administration. He is also an executive member of the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) Quality Assurance Council (QAC) and the DCMA Joint Strategic Quality Council (JSQC).

#### **Jacob Golden**

Quality Assurance Specialist,  
Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA)

**Mr. Jacob Golden** serves as a Quality Assurance Specialist at the DCMA, bringing extensive experience from both his military and civilian careers. Originally from Picayune, Mississippi, he has built a comprehensive background in avionics and quality assurance, contributing to key programs across the United States' space and defense sectors.

Mr. Golden's professional journey began with 13 years of service in the U.S. Air Force, where he specialized in avionics. His responsibilities included maintaining and repairing complex electronic systems on military aircraft - such as radar, navigation, and communication systems. This hands-on experience with advanced military hardware provided a strong foundation for his transition to DCMA.

For nearly five years, Mr. Golden has applied his expertise to uphold the highest quality standards in government-contracted projects. His contributions have supported several high-profile NASA initiatives, including the Space Launch System (SLS), Orion spacecraft, Exploration Upper Stage, and the International Space Station (ISS).

As a technical authority, Mr. Golden is recognized within the agency as a key resource for managing systems such as PDREP and OASIS, both essential to contract oversight and performance management. His broad technical knowledge and commitment to quality assurance make him a valued member of DCMA and a vital contributor to the nation's space-exploration efforts.

**Amber Weaver**

Quality Manager, Ross Machine

**Ms. Amber Weaver** is a Quality Professional at Ross Machine in Baltimore, Maryland. With 18 years of quality-management experience in aerospace and defense manufacturing, she has established herself as a trusted advisor to small manufacturing businesses throughout the Baltimore region. Her expertise in ISO 9001:2015 and AS9100D implementation is supported by extensive technical knowledge in fabrication, machining, and assembly operations.

With four years of experience in larger aerospace manufacturing environments, Ms. Weaver understands the resource constraints and agility required of smaller manufacturers. She delivers practical, scalable quality-management systems and provides expert guidance in internal and supplier audits, root-cause analysis, corrective action, and process-efficiency improvements. Her mission is to make world-class quality achievable for companies of every size.

9:30 - 11:45 am

## SESSION 1B WORKSHOP

### Managing Multiple Quality Risks

**Abstract:** Many quality professionals have heard statements such as: “You need to do more with less,” “We can’t afford that much quality,” “Why do I need that much inspection support?” or “Why do I need oversight of suppliers - they should manage their own quality.” How should you respond? This workshop provides practical tools and shared experiences to help answer those questions. Participants can expect:

- 1) A brief presentation on determining the Cost of Poor Quality (COPQ) - a foundation for demonstrating the value of quality science, root-cause analysis, corrective action, and preventive action.
- 2) A short discussion on calculating Return on Investment (ROI) - useful for communicating the value and impact of the Quality organization.
- 3) A focused conversation on how Quality can make informed trade-offs among QC, QA, and Quality Analytics based on risk.
- 4) Breakout group discussions, where participants will share experiences and actions taken in their own organizations. Each group will identify its most impactful ideas and present them to the larger audience.

**Keith Horbatuck**

Quality Director, Integration, Test, & Delivery (ITD)  
Lockheed Martin Space

**Dr. Keith Horbatuck** is the ITD Quality Director for Lockheed Martin Space. In this role, he is responsible for Software Quality, Integration and Test, final-product delivery, and AS9100 compliance across the Space business portfolio, supporting both domestic and international customers. He brings more than 20 years of experience to this position and is a collaborative, methodical, and forward-thinking leader who has held roles in operations, avionics, test engineering, global sustainment, safety, systems engineering, and business capture.

Throughout his career, Dr. Horbatuck has demonstrated a proven ability to collaborate effectively across the enterprise and with industry partners and customers, ensuring that quality maintains a strong and influential presence. He is a Lean Six Sigma Certified Black Belt, a Senior Member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a voting member of the International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG), and the author of multiple refereed publications in sustainment and infrastructure optimization.

Dr. Horbatuck holds a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering from The College of New Jersey, a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of North Florida, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Systems & Engineering Management from Texas Tech University.

**Craig Bennett**

NASA Program Manager, DCMA HQ

**Mr. Craig Bennett** has served as the NASA Subject Matter Expert and Program Manager for DCMA Headquarters since 2011. DCMA HQ has developed and operated global DoD and NASA spacecraft contract oversight teams. With more than 30 years of aerospace industry experience, he is responsible for agency-level NASA policies that support a professional acquisition workforce overseeing spacecraft contracts for NASA and the DoD worldwide.

Mr. Bennett spent 11 years in Florida supporting launch operations and program management for NASA's Space Shuttle Program Solid Rocket Boosters and DoD spaceborne systems with DCMA. He began his career in the U.S. Air Force, serving 23 years on active duty and in the reserves, focusing on DoD aerospace systems.

Mr. Bennett has received numerous recognitions and awards from both civilian and military organizations. He serves as chair of multiple agency-level committees. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Program Management and an MBA in Operations and International Business, and he has completed the Harvard Kennedy School of Government Senior Executive Fellows Program, the University of Virginia Darden School of Business Leadership Program, and U.S. Air Force Senior Professional Military Education. He is Defense Workforce Acquisition Certified, a DoD Acquisition Corps member, a Six Sigma Black Belt, and has completed U.S. Office of Personnel Management leadership and management development programs.

**Rob Pollard**

Director of Space Systems Quality,  
L3Harris Technologies, Space & Airborne Systems  
(SAS) Segment

**Mr. Rob Pollard** joined L3Harris Technologies in 2025, where he serves as Director of Quality for the Space Systems sector within the Space & Airborne Systems segment. In this role, he leads a team of more than 150 quality professionals supporting all divisions across the sector.

Before joining L3Harris, Mr. Pollard held multiple mission-assurance roles at BAE Systems (legacy Ball Aerospace) and previously worked at Raytheon in St. Petersburg, Florida, in reliability, quality assurance, and system safety. His work supported the design, build, and test of ground, air, and surface electronics for the United States Navy.

Mr. Pollard began his career in the U.S. Navy, earning a basic electricity and electronics rating as an Electronics Technician (ET). He brings more than 25 years of experience spanning the full range of mission-assurance disciplines, from hands-on technical work to organizational leadership. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from the University of South Florida.



**Brian Tenney**

Director of Sustainment Quality,  
Lockheed Martin

**Mr. Brian Tenney** is the Director of Sustainment Quality for the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company. In this role, he supports a global team of 150 employees responsible for overseeing quality compliance across multiple Lockheed Martin products.

Mr. Tenney's previous quality-leadership roles include serving as Mission Assurance Director, where he ensured Quality Management System compliance for the Advanced Development, U-2, F-35, F-16, F-22, and F-2 programs.

Before transitioning into Quality, Mr. Tenney served as Director of Production Engineering on the F-22 program, leading a team responsible for tooling, planning, Material Review Board (MRB) activities, and corrective action.

Mr. Tenney began his career as a structural design engineer, contributing to the F-22, Trident II D5, Mk4/5, MILSTAR, and B-2 programs.

In addition to his aerospace career, Mr. Tenney served for 32 years in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Mr. Tenney holds a bachelor's degree in Space Science from the Florida Institute of Technology, a master's degree in Quality Assurance from Southern Polytechnic State University, and a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.



1:00 - 1:30 pm

**Luncheon Featured Speaker**

**Sid Bhatnagar**  
CEO, American Society  
for Quality, Inc. (ASQ)

**Mr. Sid Bhatnagar** joined ASQ in 2020 and has served as the organization's Chief Executive Officer since 2023. He previously held senior leadership roles as Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff, where he led organizational alignment, strategic execution, enterprise modernization, and long-term transformation. His background spans academia, manufacturing, and more than a decade in financial services, where he shaped strategy, governance, and operational excellence.

With over 15 years of executive leadership experience, Mr. Bhatnagar has guided complex organizations through periods of change, growth, and uncertainty. He is recognized for his people-centered leadership style, disciplined execution, and commitment to creating sustainable value in rapidly evolving global environments.

Drawn to ASQ's mission and global reputation for advancing quality, Mr. Bhatnagar joined the organization with a deep commitment to elevating the voice and impact of the quality profession. He is focused on strengthening member value, expanding thought leadership, and fostering cross-industry collaboration to ensure quality remains a strategic driver of trust, performance, and innovation worldwide.

Mr. Bhatnagar has worked extensively across international ecosystems and complex stakeholder environments, partnering with government, industry, and mission-aligned organizations to build strategic alliances and advance shared objectives. He also serves as chair of multiple organizations and contributes to advisory councils spanning technology, associations, and related sectors. He is experienced in working closely with Boards of Directors and executive leadership teams to align priorities, strengthen governance, and enable organizational excellence.

Mr. Bhatnagar holds a bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems and Corporate Communications from the University of Wisconsin and an Executive MBA from Marquette University.

1:45 - 2:15 pm

**Keynote Speaker**

**Marisela Reyes**  
Vice President of  
Total Quality Boeing Defense,  
Space and Security

**Ms. Marisela Reyes** is the vice president of Quality & Lean for Boeing Defense, Space and Security (BDS). She joined The Boeing Company in November 2021. In her role, she is responsible for developing and implementing quality strategies across all BDS programs, and she leads Quality Management System execution for all BDS sites.

Previously, Ms. Reyes spent three years at Eaton Corporation as vice president of Corporate Quality and Continuous Improvement. Before that, she served for a decade as a quality and operations executive at United Technologies Corporation Aerospace Systems (UTAS). Earlier in her career, she spent 20 years with the Ford Motor Company, where she held several key engineering and leadership roles.

Ms. Reyes also serves as Boeing's voting member for the International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG).

Ms. Reyes holds a bachelor's degree in industrial and operations engineering and a master's degree in business administration, both from the University of Michigan. She also earned a master's degree in industrial engineering from Purdue University and is a certified Six Sigma Black Belt.

2:30 - 4:45 pm

**SESSION 2 PANEL**

### Navigating Supply Chain Chaos: Mitigating Risks and Adapting to Regulatory Changes

**Abstract:** In today's dynamic global landscape, organizations face unprecedented challenges in maintaining supply chain resilience and adapting to regulatory changes. This panel will explore critical strategies for mitigating supply chain risks, with a focus on the 12 key elements of Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) that are essential for enduring success. The discussion will underscore the importance of flowing down quality requirements to ensure compliance and uphold the integrity of operations across the supply chain. Additionally, the panel will

highlight how leveraging a continuous operating model enables organizations to proactively address risks, anticipate regulatory shifts, and seamlessly adapt to industry changes. Attendees will gain valuable insights and practical approaches to strengthen their supply chain operations, ensuring long-term resilience and adaptability in an ever-evolving environment.

## Session 2 - Panel Moderator

### Clementine Uwineza

Corporate Supplier Quality Lead, RTX

**Ms. Clementine Uwineza** currently serves as the Associate Director, Corporate Supplier Quality Lead at RTX Corporation, a leading aerospace and defense company with more than 185,000 employees worldwide. In this role, she directs strategic supplier quality initiatives and drives cross-functional collaboration to support corporate objectives across three major business units, overseeing a global supply base of more than 15,000 suppliers.

Prior to joining RTX in 2020, Ms. Uwineza spent 15 years at Deere & Company in a variety of roles, gaining broad experience across design, manufacturing, quality, human resources, and supply chain management. She is a proven leader who has successfully guided large global teams and managed complex products and processes across multiple business units.

Ms. Uwineza holds a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering and a Master of Science in Engineering Program Management, both from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

## Session 2 - Panelist 1

### Integrating Quality into Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)

**Abstract (Rick Roelecke):** Let's explore the 12 government-defined elements of SCRM and examine how Quality can play a pivotal role in strengthening supply chain resilience. Today, organizations rely on a range of functions - Integrated Supply Chain (ISC), purchasing, cybersecurity, and others - to manage SCRM. But what is the specific role of quality and mission assurance, and how do we ensure that SCRM effectively prevents business disruption? What tools and methods are companies using to manage SCRM? How is SCRM reshaping the execution of risk management requirements within AS9100? These are the key questions this panel will evaluate and discuss. SCRM represents an exciting and expanding opportunity for Quality professions, so join us to learn more.

### Rick Roelecke

Sr. Engineering Manager, Supplier Assurance, Enterprise Assurance & Integrated Supply Chain, BAE Space and Mission Systems

See Mr. Rick Roelecke's bio on page 9

## Session 2 - Panelist 2

### Mitigating Risk Through Effective Quality Requirement Flowdown

**Abstract (Rob Zifer):** Panelists will discuss the importance of ensuring that proper quality requirements are accurately flowed down on purchase orders. They will share best practices for making these requirements clear, well-understood, and consistently followed to mitigate potential risks.

### Rob Zifer

Director of Corporate Supplier Quality, Northrop Grumman

**Mr. Rob Zifer** serves as the Corporate Director of Supplier Quality for Northrop Grumman, leading the people, processes, and tools that drive Supplier Quality excellence across the enterprise. His work focuses on delivering maximum value to programs by enhancing collaboration across sectors, strengthening cross-functional partnerships, and leveraging best practices to standardize processes.

Mr. Zifer brings more than 25 years of aerospace experience. He began his career in the U.S. Navy as an Aviation Electrician working on F/A-18 aircraft, both land-based and afloat. He is also an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, having deployed to the Kuwait-Iraq border in 2007 as a Customs Agent. Following his military service, he joined Northrop Grumman as a Reliability Engineer on the F/A-18 program before transitioning into Supplier Quality as a Quality Field Engineer supporting suppliers in Georgia. In 2015, he joined the Strike program, helping establish Tier 1 suppliers and advancing early-stage quality initiatives to improve First-Time Quality and on-time delivery performance. He also served as the Aerospace Systems Supplier Quality Field Manager and the Director of Supplier Quality Field Operations for Northrop Grumman, and as Supplier Performance and Field Operations Director for Raytheon Intelligence & Space.

Mr. Zifer holds a bachelor's degree in Technology Education and Training from The Ohio State University and a Master of Engineering in Systems Engineering from Stevens Institute of Technology.

## Session 2 - Panelist 3

### Integrating Supplier Risk Mitigation for Stronger, More Resilient Operations

**Abstract (Matthew Dowling):** Businesses operate in a dynamic environment where mitigating risks and driving continuous improvement are essential to long-term success. By applying structured methodologies, organizations can enhance efficiency, address supply chain and regulatory risks, and build greater resilience. Matt Dowling of Pratt & Whitney will share insights on integrating supplier risk mitigation into strategic planning, daily operations, and process improvement efforts. This session highlights practical approaches for fostering innovation, strengthening operational performance, and achieving sustainable outcomes in an evolving global landscape.

#### Matthew Dowling

Director of CORE Operating System, RTX

**Mr. Matthew Dowling** currently serves as the Director of CORE at Pratt & Whitney, an RTX company. In this role, he is responsible for the global deployment, execution, and maturation of CORE - the RTX standard business and continuous improvement operating system.

Previously, Mr. Dowling was the Associate Director of Operations within United Technologies Corporate. He has also held roles in quality, supplier quality, and supplier development across several aerospace businesses within legacy United Technologies, including Sikorsky Aircraft and UTC Aerospace Systems. He brings extensive experience in developing and deploying continuous improvement operating models both within the organizations he has served and across the supply chain, while ensuring compliance with industry regulations and requirements.

Mr. Dowling holds a bachelor's degree in History from Central Connecticut State University and a Master of Business Administration from Post University. He is a certified RTX CORE expert in lean and holds a certificate in Six Sigma for Project Management from Fairfield University.



2:30 - 4:45 pm

## SESSION 2A WORKSHOP

### What's New with Industry Standards

**Abstract:** The rapid evolution of digital technologies and increasing global regulatory convergence are reshaping how organizations manage and assure product and service quality. This discussion and workshop - designed for both quality engineers and quality managers - will explore the latest industry quality standards, examine how organizations can align their Quality Management Systems (QMS) with emerging digital standards, and apply data analytics to extract actionable insights from quality-related data sources. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped with practical tools and a strategic roadmap for integrating digital standards solutions, meeting global requirements, and leveraging analytics to elevate the performance and resilience of their QMS.

#### Leslie McKay

Director of Digital Standards Development, SAE International

**Ms. Leslie McKay** has more than 20 years of experience managing software and hardware products. Much of her career has focused on developing successful solutions that leverage artificial intelligence and machine learning, particularly in voice recognition and natural language processing. She received two User Experience Awards from Honeywell for leading a team that developed a voice-recognition system used to guide warehouse workers in distribution centers.

Ms. McKay joined SAE International in 2021 to advance the adoption of digital standards. In her role at SAE, and as Vice-Chair of the Digital Standards Alliance, she is dedicated to establishing best practices for authoring and using digital standards throughout the product development lifecycle.

**Doug Cartney**

Corporate Director of Quality and Mission Assurance, Northrop Grumman

**Mr. Doug Cartney** is the Corporate Director of Quality and Mission Assurance for Northrop Grumman, a leading global aerospace and defense technology company delivering advanced capabilities in military aircraft, national security space, and mission and weapon systems.

In this role, Mr. Cartney leads enterprise-wide quality and mission assurance efforts in close partnership with the company’s quality leaders. He is responsible for strengthening quality effectiveness, enhancing quality management systems, and guiding the standardization of quality and mission assurance practices across the organization.

Mr. Cartney has been with Northrop Grumman for 25 years, holding senior leadership positions in engineering, program management, and operations. Before joining the corporate office, he served as Senior Director for Quality and Mission Excellence in the Mission Systems sector. Prior to that, he was Program Director for F-35 Sustainment and International Programs.

Mr. Cartney earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Virginia Tech and a Master of Product Development (Executive Program) from Northwestern University. He has served as a mentor for military veterans through American Corporate Partners, participated in the Employee Charitable Outreach (ECHO) Fund Committee within Mission Systems, and currently serves on the board of the Education Foundation of Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

**Brian Geer**

Compliance Manager, Lockheed Martin

**Mr. Brian Geer** is a Compliance Manager with Lockheed Martin and serves as the International Document Sponsor for both the AS9100 and AS9101 standards.

Mr. Geer has more than thirty-eight years of experience in the aerospace industry, beginning his career on the shop floor and later holding roles in supervision, compliance, and Lean Six Sigma, as well as management positions in production planning and control, electrical manufacturing, industrial engineering, and manufacturing engineering.

Before entering the aerospace sector, Mr. Geer worked as a tool and die maker in the oil, automotive, and robotics industries while studying at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Mr. Geer has previously served on the Americas and International Aerospace Certification Oversight Teams and is the focal point to the International Accreditation Forum. He has been active in standards development since 2012 and has contributed to the 9100, 9101, and 9104-3 teams. He is an authenticated Aerospace Experienced Auditor and qualified OP assessor. He was also previously authenticated as an ISO 9001 Principal Auditor and has held certifications for automotive (TS16949) and nuclear (NQA-1) auditing.

**Greg Fontaine**

IAQG Digital Focal,  
Principal, Jaspin Interactive & GridNexus

**Mr. Greg Fontaine** serves as the IAQG Digital Focal, acting in a fractional CIO/CTO capacity to advise IAQG leadership and provide governance and oversight across the organization’s IT and digital ecosystem. In this role, he leads the Jaspin Interactive team supporting IAQG’s digital initiatives, including modernization efforts spanning collaboration platforms, digital standards enablement, and data and integration capabilities - driving practical adoption by improving usability, interoperability, and data accessibility so industry standards can be applied more effectively across the value chain.

With more than three decades of experience building and operating internet and online systems - from the rise of early online services to modern web platforms and cloud infrastructure - Mr. Fontaine brings a rare combination of hands-on technical depth and strategic leadership. As Principal at Jaspin Interactive and GridNexus, he helps organizations modernize mission-critical systems with a focus on security, reliability, and measurable outcomes. His early career includes roles across internet and dot-com-era ventures and startups, including early work at America Online and teaching as a technology instructor with Learning Tree International, with experience spanning a wide range of roles and technologies.



2:30 - 4:45 pm

## SESSION 2B WORKSHOP

### Building a Quality-Driven Roadmap for Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM)

**Abstract:** An effective SCRM program begins with a clear, strategic roadmap that aligns with the Quality organization and the unique characteristics of each commodity. Rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach, a strong roadmap adapts to the commodity lifecycle, incorporates multidisciplinary perspectives, and strengthens supplier partnerships across the chain. Think of your roadmap as the navigation tool that guides the implementation of your SCRM strategy and ensures quality is built in at every stage.

For quality professionals, this connection is critical: SCRM is not separate from quality - quality is a core driver of SCRM. Embedding quality practices into risk identification, supplier evaluation, and mitigation activities ensures organizations are not only compliant but resilient.

This interactive workshop will explore the essential elements of an SCRM roadmap, using real-world examples to demonstrate how organizations can design and implement their own. Participants will collaborate on a case study to develop a roadmap for a specific commodity, share insights with peers, and exchange strategies for success. Attendees will leave with practical tools, lessons learned, and a clearer understanding of how to tailor SCRM roadmaps that integrate quality and risk management to drive resilience and results.

#### Jennifer Fischer-Darby

System Assurance Manager, Supplier Quality Manager, and Space Mission Assurance Supervisor, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL)

**Ms. Jennifer Fischer-Darby** has been with the JHU/APL for 25 years, specializing in Space Mission Assurance. She has extensive experience applying quality systems management requirements and principles throughout the design, development, integration, test, and delivery of spaceflight hardware. She has supported numerous small- and large-scale projects across their full lifecycle, from inception through delivery and launch. Her expertise includes

quality compliance with NASA requirements, ISO/AS9100, CMMI, internal auditing, and supplier quality management.

Ms. Fischer-Darby is a member of JHU/APL's Principal Professional Staff and currently serves as the Group Supervisor within the Space Exploration Sector's Space Mission Assurance Group. In this role, she is responsible for overall mission assurance, internal and external auditing, supplier quality management, and maintenance of the quality management system. She has also served as Mission Assurance Manager for several APL-managed projects, including early-phase Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe, Parker Solar Probe, and Van Allen Probes.

Ms. Fischer-Darby holds a B.S. in Quality Systems Management from the National Graduate School and an M.S. in Human Environmental Sciences from the University of Alabama.

#### Shannon Marsh

Deputy Program Manager, Supply Chain Risk Management (SCRM) Strategist, SMQC

**Ms. Shannon Marsh** is a Safety and Mission Assurance (SMA) professional with extensive experience in high-risk, high-consequence environments. With more than 25 years of experience in threat and risk analysis, the majority of her career has been dedicated to supporting aerospace, NASA, and SMA initiatives. Her expertise includes risk management program development, alternative analysis, process improvement, and the mentorship and career development of personnel - particularly in analytic tradecraft.

Ms. Marsh serves as Deputy Program Manager for SMQC, where she oversees SCRM support in quality and risk analytics, strengthening NASA's supply chain integrity and resilience. She also serves as a lead assessor for Supply Chain Quality Assessments.

Ms. Marsh has extensive experience as a risk analyst across multiple sectors, including SCRM, cyber-threat analysis, and critical infrastructure protection. She has provided analytical support to the U.S. Air Force, Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Homeland Security, and the Missile Defense Agency. Her background also includes service in the U.S. Air Force as an All-Source Intelligence Analyst.

Ms. Marsh holds a Master of Arts in Global Security Studies from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Science from Excelsior College.

8:00 - 8:15 am

## Welcome & Opening Remarks

### Phil Montag

VP, Human Performance and Research Division,  
KBR (CQSDI Chair)

8:15 - 8:45 am

## Keynote Speaker



### John Steinmeyer

Director of Engineering,  
Space Access,  
U.S. Space Force,  
Space Systems Command

**Mr. John Steinmeyer** oversees engineering activities for the Space Access Program in the acquisition, integration, operation, and sustainment of the \$59B National Security Space Launch Program, the Rocket System Launch Program, and emerging Space Mobility and Logistics mission areas. Space Access provides responsive and reliable launch capability for the U.S. Space Force, Intelligence Community, and DoD mission partners, and is responsible for the sustainment and modernization of the Eastern and Western Launch Ranges. The program leverages industry partnerships to develop, produce, and operate launch, mobility, and logistics systems. He also leads Space Access's international collaboration efforts and is a certified NSSL Mission Director.

Mr. Steinmeyer joined the U.S. Space Force in 2020 after 33 years in the commercial launch industry, bringing extensive experience in engineering, program management, development, integration, operations, sales, and acquisition. Prior to his current role, he spent 10 years with Northrop Grumman and its affiliated entities. As Director and Senior Manager of Space Launch Business Development, he led efforts for the Pegasus, Minotaur, Antares, and proposed Omega launch systems. Earlier, as Senior Systems Engineering Manager, he supported development and operations of the Antares launch system for the ISS Commercial Cargo Resupply Services program and served as Integrated Product Team Lead for the Antares RD-181 main engine procurement from N.P.O. Energomash.

Mr. Steinmeyer previously spent 22 years with Boeing and the former McDonnell Douglas companies, supporting development, procurement, and operations of major expendable launch systems including Titan IV, Delta II/III/IV, Japan's H-IIA, and Sea Launch. His roles included Major Supplier

Program Manager in Nagoya, Japan, where he led a cooperative propellant-tank development effort with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries; Major Supplier Program Manager for Delta propulsion systems; Chief of Staff to the Vice President and General Manager of Boeing Expendable Launch Systems; and Director of Mission Integration for Sea Launch LLC, where he oversaw integration of more than 30 satellites and supported launch campaigns as a certified Chief Systems Engineer and Assistant Mission Director.

Mr. Steinmeyer holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from UC San Diego and an MBA with an emphasis in International Business and Organization Development from USC's Marshall School of Business. He serves on the Board of Directors of Focal Technology and on the advisory board for Concordia University Irvine's Engineering Department.

8:45 - 9:15 am

## Featured Speaker



### Michael Guymon

President and CEO  
SQA Services, Inc.

**Mr. Michael Guymon** is the President & CEO of SQA Services, Inc., a global leader in supplier quality and risk-management solutions. Since joining the company in 2022, he has advanced a data- and technology-driven approach to proactive supply chain assurance.

Mr. Guymon previously held leadership roles in supply chain and quality engineering at SpaceX, Rocket Lab USA, and Heliogen, supporting some of the industry's most demanding production environments. He holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas A&M University, where early experience with Toyota and Denso shaped his commitment to lean principles and continuous improvement.



9:30 - 11:45 am

## SESSION 3 PANEL

### Executive Order Check-In

**Abstract:** Join us to explore how industry partners have leveraged Quality Programs to mitigate risks and capitalize on opportunities arising from the hundreds of Executive Orders, memorandums, and proclamations issued since the current Presidential Administration took office. From customer impacts to supplier challenges, the landscape has shifted rapidly and often.

A cross-section of government personnel, prime contractors, and suppliers will come together to discuss these impacts and share their approaches to managing the resulting risks and opportunities, with a particular focus on how Quality Assurance Programs have been used to navigate this evolving environment.

## Session 3 - Panel Moderator

### Amber Rowson

President and CEO,  
Show Me Quality Consulting (SMQC)

**Ms. Amber Rowson** is a seasoned engineering, quality assurance, and auditing professional with more than 25 years of leadership and hands-on experience supporting safety-critical systems and vehicles. She is President and CEO of SMQC, where she also serves as a senior consultant providing engineering, QA, and program management expertise to organizations including NASA's Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, the NASA Safety Center, NASA's Office of the Chief Engineer, NAVSEA's Submarine Safety and Quality Assurance Division, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Oceaneering, the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Supervisor of Shipbuilding—Newport News, and ISO consultants supporting health care and the Veterans Health Administration.

Ms. Rowson holds several professional and academic leadership roles. She chairs the Industrial Advisory Committee for the University of Missouri's Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department and serves on the MU Alumni Association Board of Directors, MU's Flagship Council, and the planning committee for the CQSDI.

## Session 3 - Panelist 1

### Navigating the Rapidly Shifting Defense Regulatory Landscape

**Abstract (Tim White):** The regulatory and statutory landscape continues to evolve at an accelerating pace. This session will examine the current state of defense regulations and the ways in which industry is adapting. We will also highlight the work of the Joint Strategic Quality Council and explore how its initiatives support government and industry in meeting emerging expectations.

### Tim White

Vice President of Engineering and Technology,  
Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)

**Dr. Tim White** is the Vice President of Engineering and Technology at AIA, where he represents the technical workforce to policymakers. He leads AIA staff and members in developing and executing programs that enhance cost savings, performance, and efficiency across the aerospace and defense industry.

With more than 20 years of experience in the aerospace and defense sector, Dr. White has held operational and consulting roles at Raytheon, Honeywell, and Bechtel. His background spans both commercial and defense products, with leadership experience in engineering, operations, supply chain, and quality. He has also worked with advanced technology companies such as Interos and Mosaic Data Sciences, focusing on delivering solutions in artificial intelligence, advanced analytics, and digital transformation.

Dr. White holds a B.S. and M.S. in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA from Brigham Young University, as well as a Ph.D. in Systems Engineering from George Washington University. He is additionally certified in Quality Engineering, Quality Auditing, Six Sigma, Root Cause Analysis, and Change Leadership.

## Session 3 - Panelist 2

### Transforming Quality into a Scalable Strategic Capability

**Abstract (Nick Dolan):** The aerospace and defense industry is entering a new expansion cycle driven by White House budget-based investments, Golden Dome initiatives, accelerated shipbuilding programs, and recent Executive Orders. Manufacturers are under pressure to scale rapidly while strengthening

supply chain resilience and increasing domestic sourcing - all as regulatory scrutiny, cybersecurity requirements, and compliance expectations continue to intensify.

For both primes and sub-primes, growth exposes operational fault lines. Disconnected Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES), and QMS create visibility gaps across suppliers, limit traceability, delay risk detection, and turn audit readiness into a reactive exercise. As supply chains become more complex - and more domestic - organizations must ensure that compliance, quality, and cost control are embedded directly into daily execution.

Attendees will gain practical insight into how a connected, compliance-first approach transforms quality from a siloed function into a strategic capability, enabling resilient, scalable defense manufacturing aligned with the administration's recent directives.

**Nick Dolan**

Manufacturing Team Lead, Sr. Product Specialist, Deltek TIP Technologies

**Mr. Nick Dolan** is a seasoned professional with more than 11 years of experience supporting aerospace and defense organizations in the deployment and optimization of Quality Management Software Systems. His work has focused on helping companies achieve and maintain compliance with stringent industry standards, including AS9100, ISO 9001, and NADCAP, while driving operational efficiency and continuous improvement across complex manufacturing environments.

Mr. Dolan has collaborated extensively with leading aerospace manufacturers, defense contractors, and tiered suppliers to implement technology-driven solutions that enhance quality assurance, traceability, and regulatory adherence. His expertise in quality systems integration and process improvement has positioned him as a trusted partner for organizations seeking to modernize their quality infrastructure and mitigate risk in highly regulated sectors.

In addition to his professional contributions, Mr. Dolan serves as a member of the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) Quality Assurance Committee, where he works alongside industry leaders to advance best practices and influence the development of quality standards that shape the future of aerospace and defense manufacturing.

Through his commitment to excellence and innovation, Mr. Dolan continues to play a pivotal role in helping organizations achieve superior quality performance and maintain the highest levels of compliance and efficiency.

**Session 3 - Panelist 3**

**Integrating Agile Methodologies into Mission Assurance Frameworks**

**Abstract (Rocky Khullar):** Mr. Khullar will outline the evolution of Mission Assurance (MA) within a rapidly changing acquisition landscape. The presentation defines MA as the application of scientific and engineering principles to achieve mission success, clearly distinguishing it from traditional Quality Assurance. By integrating agile methodologies, it demonstrates how MA can adapt to new technologies, evolving acquisition strategies, and shifting mission requirements - ultimately offering tailored services that prioritize safety, risk management, and mission success.

**Rocky Khullar**

Sr. Project Engineer,  
Mission Assurance Strategy Office,  
The Aerospace Corporation

**Mr. Rocky Khullar** is a seasoned aerospace and technology professional with more than 25 years of experience leading high-impact initiatives at the intersection of mission assurance, product management, and engineering strategy. He currently serves as a Senior Project Engineer for Mission Assurance Strategy at The Aerospace Corporation, where he specializes in driving technical development and process improvements for critical national security space programs.

Throughout his career, Mr. Khullar has demonstrated a strong ability to bridge complex engineering requirements with commercial product strategy. His portfolio includes significant roles at Panasonic Avionics Corporation, where he served as a Senior Product Manager overseeing high-revenue product integrations, and at EverCommerce, where he scaled product strategies for digital platforms. His expertise spans the full lifecycle of aerospace systems - from business development with civil customers to the execution of rigorous mission assurance protocols for national security space assets.

Mr. Khullar holds an MBA from the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business, an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from UCLA, and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from UC San Diego. He is also a Certified Scrum Master, combining deep technical roots with modern agile leadership practices to drive innovation in the evolving aerospace landscape.

9:30 - 11:45 am

## SESSION 3A WORKSHOP

### Knowledge Transfer - Building Workforce Capability Resilience

**Abstract:** What have we collectively learned about the challenges of retaining and transferring mission critical knowledge as personnel with deep expertise retire? In this workshop, we will discuss and examine real work experiences on difficulties with knowledge transfer due to reductions in force, retirements, voluntary resignations, and re-organizations. How can an organization maintain technical and operational continuity during the workforce erosions? This workshop will discuss the challenges of knowledge retention and examine multiple approaches for knowledge transfer that can help organizations to strengthen workforce resilience and preserve organizational memory and technical proficiency.

#### Jane Loda

Dean of Quality Engineering, Pratt and Whitney

**Ms. Jane Loda**, a Certified Professional in Training and Development (CPTD), is the Dean of Quality Engineering for Pratt & Whitney, a division of RTX. A passionate advocate for employee career development and lifelong learning, she oversees technical education and proficiency-development initiatives supporting Quality and Operations personnel worldwide. She works closely with Quality Technical Fellows and Discipline Chiefs on related organizational initiatives.

In prior roles within RTX, Ms. Loda served as Dean of the Manufacturing Engineering Technical College at Pratt & Whitney, Manager of Technical and Engineering Education for the RTX Corporate HQ Learning and Development group, and a developer of targeted graduate certificate and degree programs with top-tier universities to strengthen the competitive advantage in key technical disciplines. Originally hired and trained as a Digital Systems Analyst and Network Infrastructure Specialist, she became an integrator who connects people, systems, and technology to create new capabilities across the corporate workplace.

With more than 35 years of experience in workplace technical education and digital technology, Ms. Loda enjoys creating learning solutions that integrate business needs, change management, knowledge management, and project management disciplines. Outside her role at Pratt & Whitney, she teaches Quality and Change Management as an adjunct professor for The American Women's College at Bay Path University.

Ms. Loda holds a B.S. in Computational and Applied Mathematics & Computer Science from the University of Connecticut, an M.A. in Humanities from Wesleyan University, an M.A. in Adult Education from Pennsylvania State University, and an M.S. in Information Design from SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

#### Belinda Chavez

SA3 Operations Manager, SAN SMA Manager, KBR

**Ms. Belinda Chavez** is an Operations Manager for KBR, Mission Technology Solutions, in support of the NASA Safety & Mission Assurance Audit, Assessment, and Analysis contract. She also serves as the KBR Safety & Mission Assurance Manager for the SWFO Ground Segment Antenna Network contract. She has over 25 years of safety and quality experience with NASA and Department of Defense contractors.

Ms. Chavez earned a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial technology at the Southern Illinois University, and a Master in Business Administration at the Louisiana Technical University. She has been an active ASQ volunteer member leader for over 20 years holding various member leader positions including ASQ Board of Directors, Region Director, and officer/committee chair for multiple technical and geographic member communities. She is an ASQ Fellow and ASQ Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence, ASQ Certified Six Sigma Black Belt, and George Group Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt.

Ms. Chavez received various company and NASA awards including a United Space Alliance Safety Quest Award, a NASA Space Flight Awareness Award, the NASA Astronaut Silver Snoopy Award, and multiple NASA Group Achievement Awards.

#### Jerri Ji

President, Sterling Quality Management

**Ms. Jerri Ji** is the president of Sterling Quality Management with more than 29 years of experience in the space industry. As a Quality Assurance Subject Matter Expert, she supports quality assurance activities at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, leads supplier audits, analyzes supplier performance data, and provides recommendations for quality risk mitigation. She also works closely with JPL's key suppliers, conducting milestone reviews and inspections. She is a recipient of multiple NASA Group Achievement Awards.

Ms. Ji holds a Master of Engineering and a Bachelor of Science. She is an active ASQ volunteer leader and the Past Chair of the Aviation, Space, and Defense Division. She is an ASQ certified Quality Auditor and a Six Sigma Black Belt.

9:30 - 11:45 am

**SESSION 3B WORKSHOP****Achieving an Effective Quality & Safety Culture**

**Abstract:** Recent events in the aerospace industry continue to spark discussions around “Quality Culture” and “Safety Culture.” These conversations often arise in response to various incidents, leading to independent reviews, process changes, and increased scrutiny regarding process compliance and system certification. Although strong, well-defined Quality Management Systems (QMS) and Safety Management Systems (SMS) are essential for organizations that develop, produce, or operate complex systems, these systems alone may be insufficient. A proactive, deeply rooted culture often provides the strongest foundation for long-term success.

This workshop builds on the highly rated Quality & Safety Culture Workshops presented at the 2023, 2024, and 2025 CQSDIs. This immersive, hands-on session will begin with a brief review of the relationship between QMS and SMS, along with the key attributes of quality and safety culture. Participants will then move into multiple parallel breakout sessions aligned with common culture attributes. In these sessions, attendees will discuss real-world cultural challenges and explore approaches that were taken - or could have been taken - to strengthen their organizations. Each breakout will be guided by experts experienced in addressing culture-related issues, with frequent regrouping to share key insights and improvement strategies.

Additionally, this workshop will place greater emphasis on methods for identifying and implementing culture improvements. Participants will gain experience with tools and strategies for building a successful culture, examine the interplay between culture and change management, and hear real-life examples of effective culture transformation.

**Jim Wade**

Engineering and Mission Assurance Leader

**Dr. James W. Wade** has extensive experience in the aerospace and defense industry, spanning leadership roles in government, federal research and development, education, and industry. He previously served as Corporate Vice President for Quality & Compliance at Raytheon Technologies, where he worked across quality and mission assurance, engineering, supply chain, operations, and program management to help deliver products and services that supported customer mission success. He joined Raytheon in 2010 as Vice President of Mission Assurance, leading enterprise-wide Mission Assurance, Quality, Supplier Quality, and Continuous Improvement.

After a brief early retirement from RTX, Dr. Wade joined the University of North Dakota as a Professor of Aerospace Engineering. He teaches courses in spacecraft systems engineering, spacecraft attitude dynamics and control, and failure analysis and prevention, including case studies in aerospace and aircraft systems.

From 2006 to 2010, Dr. Wade served as Head of the MIT Lincoln Laboratory Safety and Mission Assurance Office, where he strengthened hardware, software, integration, and quality capabilities. He established the Laboratory's first Mission Assurance function, including implementation of an AS9100-compliant quality management system.

From 1993 to 2006, Dr. Wade held key leadership roles at NASA, including Manager of the International Space Station Safety and Mission Assurance/ Program Risk Office. He also led integrated safety and risk analyses that confirmed the need to continue manning the ISS immediately following the Columbia accident.

Dr. Wade earned his doctorate in Aerospace Engineering Sciences from the University of Colorado Boulder. He holds a master's degree in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering from the University of Illinois, as well as an MBA and an M.S. in Space Science from the University of Houston–Clear Lake. He received his bachelor's degree in Physics from Gustavus Adolphus College.

He is a registered Professional Engineer in Texas and an ASQ Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence. He also holds an Executive Certification in Technology, Operations, and Value Chain Management from the MIT Sloan School of Management and is a Certified Instrument Flight Instructor and Commercial Pilot.



**Glenn Blazek**

Instructional Design and Systems Engineering  
Training Specialist

**Mr. Glenn Blazek** is highly skilled in instructional design and systems engineering training. He has supported a wide range of technical and leadership development programs throughout his career with organizations including Aerojet Rocketdyne (Engineer), Pratt & Whitney (Quality Engineer), Boeing (Systems Analyst and Training Programmer/Designer), and Florida Blue (Consultant on their training simulation program with Blue Cross/Blue Shield). He also practiced as an Attorney-at-Law from 1983 to 1989. He has facilitated 40 two-day leadership workshops across ten U.S. states and four additional workshops in Singapore.

Mr. Blazek is the author of a self-help guide for individuals experiencing homelessness and has published multiple articles on soft skills for children, workplace skills for higher-education students, workplace technology for legal professionals, and self-help resources for institutionalized mental health patients. He also served as Associate Editor of the United Kingdom-based Electronic Journal of e-Learning.

Mr. Blazek earned a B.A. from the University of Richmond and a Juris Doctor from the University of Richmond School of Law, as well as an M.S. in Computer Information Systems and an M.A. in Education from the University of Phoenix. He has delivered numerous presentations on leadership training and instructional design at conferences and forums and received the Special Executive Award for Leadership Training.

**Doug Cartney**

Corporate Director of Quality and Mission Assurance, Northrop Grumman

**See Mr. Cartney's bio on page 15**

**Yvette Harris**

Senior Quality Leader,  
Americas for PPG Aerospace.

**Ms. Yvette Harris**, LSSBB, CQM-OE, MSEM, is the Senior Quality Leader, Americas, for PPG Aerospace. Prior to joining PPG Aerospace, she served as the Associate Principal Director of the Corporate Quality Management Office at The Aerospace Corporation. She also worked at Raytheon as Senior Manager of Mission Assurance in El Segundo, where she led a team of 12 Program Quality Managers and Engineers.

Over her more than twenty-year career, Ms. Harris has held numerous engineering and organizational leadership roles, including Global Quality Director, Senior Manager of Quality, Global Manufacturing Technology Program Manager, Regional Quality/CI Manager, North America Powder Coatings Business Manager, Energy Engineering Consultant, Sales and Technical Services Leader, and Lead Process and Production Engineer.

Ms. Harris earned a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, and an M.S. in Engineering Management from Drexel University. She also completed two years toward a Ph.D. in Business Management at Capella University. She has taught Green Belt courses, mentored numerous candidates, and earned her Lean Six Sigma Black Belt certification in 2009.

In 2024, Ms. Harris received the Black Engineer of the Year Science Spectrum Trailblazer National Award for outstanding performance in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. She was also honored with the Robert H. Herndon Award, recognizing African American employees who exemplify professional excellence and humanitarian contributions at individual, corporate, and community levels. The nature of the award is to recognize individuals' professional achievements beneficial to The Aerospace Corporation, contributions to the enhancement of the quality of community life at large, and personal development.

In 2022, Ms. Harris was selected as the Quality Engineer of the Year by the Engineers' Council, in collaboration with ASQ Section 706, for her career contributions to quality engineering, continuous improvement, and STEM education. She was nominated by leadership at The Aerospace Corporation.



1:00 - 1:30 pm

## Luncheon Featured Speaker



**Sonya Ebright**  
Deputy Director,  
Defense Contract Management  
Agency (DCMA)

**Ms. Sonya Ebright** serves as the Deputy Director of the DCMA, where she oversees more than 10,000 civilian and military personnel who provide contract administration services for the Department of War (DOW), other federal agencies, and international partners. The agency manages over 200,000 contracts valued at \$3.5 trillion across more than 10,000 contractor locations worldwide and authorizes approximately \$1 billion in contractor payments each business day.

Previously, Ms. Ebright served as the Executive Director of the DCMA Contracts Directorate, leading more than 3,000 contract acquisition professionals. Over her 37-year Navy career, she supported operations, major DOW weapon systems, and numerous subsystems.

Ms. Ebright has served with NATO and most recently commanded DCMA International. Her experience spans contracting, operations, financial management, logistics, strategic management, and special programs.

Ms. Ebright holds a B.S. in English (Summa Cum Laude) from the University of Idaho, an M.S. in Systems Management with a specialty in Contracting from the Naval Postgraduate School, and an M.S. in Strategic Resourcing from the National Defense University's Eisenhower School. She also completed the Program for Organizational Leadership at Stanford University.

Ms. Ebright's accolades include the Admiral Edward F. Ney Award, the Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Award, and the Admiral Robert F. Batchelder Award. Her military decorations include numerous Defense Service Awards.

1:45- 2:15 pm

## Featured Speakers



**Bart Kemper**  
Principal Engineer,  
Kemper Engineering Services

**Mr. Bart Kemper** is a Louisiana-based mechanical engineer with 30 years of engineering consulting experience across a wide range of industries, as well as military engineering service through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He served as the lead investigator for a technical team reviewing OceanGate's documents and engineering on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Board of Investigation, providing testimony during the September 2024 hearings and serving as lead author of the team's report to the U.S. government.

Mr. Kemper's civilian career includes expertise in pressure vessels, marine and subsea engineering, plastics engineering, life-safety applications, medical devices, human factors, and numerical modeling. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Reserve, where his duties as an engineer officer included construction, infrastructure assessment and development, project management, and multiple command assignments.

Mr. Kemper has authored more than 35 professional publications, serves as a peer reviewer and associate editor for multiple journals, and previously served as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of the National Academy of Forensic Engineers. He is an active member of several ASME Codes & Standards committees, including Pressure Vessels for Human Occupancy - which covers medical hyperbaric chambers, submarines, and commercial diving systems. He also serves on ASME VVUQ subcommittees VVUQ 10 (Solid Mechanics) and VVUQ 70 (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning), as well as the E54 Committee on Homeland Security Applications.



1:45- 2:15 pm

**Featured Speakers (cont.)**

**Krista Kemper**  
President,  
Kemper Engineering Services

**Ms. Krista Kemper** is the owner and president of Kemper Engineering Services. She served in the US Army, including two tours in Somalia. After completing her military service, she entered the software testing industry, becoming a project manager and lab manager responsible for designing test systems for clients such as Adobe and overseeing software-to-hardware integration testing. She later transitioned into mechanical design and project management at an engineering firm.

Following the passing of one of the company founders - and with the other still active in military duty - Ms. Kemper assumed leadership of Kemper Engineering Services. She has continued to apply her testing and quality-control expertise as part of her management responsibilities. She has been a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Pressure Vessels for Human Occupancy (PVHO) committee for over 15 years, contributing to standards covering submarines, medical hyperbaric chambers, and commercial diving systems. She was recently elected Chair of the PVHO Quality Control Subcommittee.

Ms. Kemper has also served on National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) policy committees and as a Subject Matter Expert for the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET), contributing to the development of the Systems Software Integrator certification. She has applied her expertise to numerous root-cause analyses and forensic engineering cases.

Ms. Kemper was part of the multidisciplinary team conducting a technical investigation into OceanGate and the Titan Submersible on behalf of the US Coast Guard. She has also published a number of technical papers and earned over a dozen patents.



2:30 - 4:45 pm

## **SESSION 4A Workshop** **Lessons Lost: Why History Repeats** **and How to Break the Cycle**

**Abstract:** Organizations across government and industry continue to experience failures that echo past mishaps - often despite known warnings and documented lessons. This interactive workshop examines why the gap between lessons learned and lessons applied persists, and how organizations can shift from simply storing knowledge to actively preventing repeat failures.

The session integrates focused perspectives on the importance of institutional learning, practical operational examples from NASA, and a facilitated case study of the Titan submersible accident.

Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how to embed lessons into decision-making, governance, and operational processes - transforming institutional memory into durable prevention systems that reduce the likelihood of repeating past failures.

### **Ann Over**

Founder and Principal, ARNEXGEN, LLC

**Ms. Ann Over** is the Founder and Principal of ARNEXGEN, LLC, a company dedicated to passing technical and program management knowledge to the next generation of engineers. She retired from NASA in 2019 following a 36-year career spanning engineering, program management, and human spaceflight leadership.

During her NASA career, Ms. Over held a wide range of technical and management roles at the NASA Glenn Research Center, NASA Headquarters, and across major agency programs. Her work included designing interplanetary and Earth-orbit trajectories; managing teams that developed and operated Space Shuttle and International Space Station payloads; leading technology development and space science programs; and culminating her career in program management for the Artemis/Orion human spaceflight missions to the Moon. She also led the Space Shuttle manifest and the integration of science payloads at NASA Headquarters.

Ms. Over has been recognized with more than 20 NASA honor awards, including the Outstanding Leadership Medal, Exceptional Service Medal, Silver Snoopy Award, and 14 Group Achievement Awards. In 2012, she earned Senior/Expert Level Project Manager certification for U.S. Federal Acquisitions. She is a graduate of The Ohio State University, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering.

**Ledlyne Vazquez**

Branch Chief for Systems Engineering & Integration, NASA Kennedy Space Center

**Dr. Ledlyne Vazquez** is the Branch Chief for Systems Engineering and Integration at NASA's Kennedy Space Center. She leads a multidisciplinary engineering organization responsible for developing, integrating, and validating system-level technical solutions that enable NASA's exploration missions. Her portfolio includes establishing systems engineering strategy, ensuring technical authority across complex programs, guiding workforce development, and driving cross-discipline integration to achieve mission readiness for ground and flight systems.

Before assuming her current leadership role, Dr. Vazquez served as the Lead Systems Engineer for the Ground Special Power (GSP) Subsystem. In that capacity, she oversaw system design, integration, and verification for GSP on Artemis I, which successfully launched in 2022.

Dr. Vazquez holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Central Florida, an M.S. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Miami, and a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Central Florida.

**Michael Bell**

Chief Knowledge Officer and NASA Lessons Learned Program Manager, NASA Kennedy Space Center

**Dr. Michael A. Bell** serves as Chief Knowledge Officer for NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) and Program Manager for NASA's Lessons Learned Information System (LLIS), where he promotes and facilitates knowledge collection and sharing across programs and projects. He joined KSC in 1994 as a management analyst in the Human Resources Directorate. Prior to NASA, he worked in the electronics manufacturing industry as an industrial engineer, designing and managing factory layout projects, developing manufacturing simulation models, and conducting quality system audits.

Dr. Bell holds a B.S. in Industrial Engineering from Northwestern University, an M.S. in Engineering Management from the University of Central Florida, and a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Miami.

**Aaron Morris**

Parachute Integration Group (PIG) Manager, Safety Division, NASA Kennedy Space Center

**Mr. Aaron Morris** has more than 25 years of experience in parachute systems and Entry, Descent, and Landing (EDL) technologies. He has held systems engineering, aerospace engineering, and project management roles at NASA Johnson Space Center, NASA Langley Research Center, and NASA Kennedy Space Center, contributing to major programs including the Space Shuttle, Orion, multiple Space Technology Mission Directorate projects, and the Commercial Crew Program.

Mr. Morris currently serves in the KSC Safety Division as the Parachute Integration Group (PIG) Manager, leading a team of engineers and technicians responsible for the design, development, and surveillance of human-crewed spacecraft parachute systems for Orion and the Commercial Crew Program.

Mr. Morris has authored more than 30 papers on atmospheric flight and parachute technology and has served as an instructor for the AIAA Parachute Short Course on nine occasions. He has contributed to numerous industry technical committees and currently serves as Chair of the AIAA Parachutes Technical Committee.

2:30 - 4:45 pm

**SESSION 4B WORKSHOP****Communicating the Importance of Quality to Leadership**

**Abstract:** In today's fast-paced business landscape, quality often competes with growth, innovation, and cost-cutting priorities for program and leadership attention. This hands-on workshop equips participants with proven communication strategies to position quality initiatives as strategic investments and value-adding proposals. Attendees will learn how to translate quality into business language, break down barriers to leadership buy-in, and build a template to justify risks and demonstrate value through "quality as blended learning." The session incorporates interactive case analyses, role-play exercises, and real-time feedback.

Participants will leave with a ready-to-implement playbook and the confidence to champion quality as a core driver of organizational value.

**Nicole Wendt**

Quality and Mission Assurance Manager,  
Northrop Grumman

**Ms. Nicole Wendt** is the Apopka, Florida, Site Quality and Mission Assurance (Q&MA) Manager for Northrop Grumman's Mission Systems sector. In this role, she leads a team of quality engineers, managers, inspectors, and component engineers supporting a variety of aerospace and defense programs. Her responsibilities include managing the site's ISO-certified Quality Management System, serving as an executive sponsor for site employee resource groups, and acting as the Parts, Materials, and Processes lead on several programs.

Ms. Wendt has more than 16 years of experience in the aerospace, defense, and commercial industries, with roles spanning materials and process engineering, operations, and program management. She is a committee member of the CQSDI and has mentored numerous Q&MA engineering and supply chain professionals. She holds a Bachelor of Biomedical Engineering from Stevens Institute of Technology.

**Clementine Uwineza**

Corporate Supplier Quality Lead, RTX

See Ms. Uwineza's bio on page 13



2:30 - 4:45 pm

**SESSION 4C WORKSHOP****Engineering Quality Across the Aerospace Lifecycle**

**Abstract:** Aerospace and defense organizations continue to face extended certification timelines, recurring quality escapes, and supplier instability - despite mature standards, robust oversight, and decades of operational experience. These challenges increasingly reflect structural limitations of inspection-centric quality models that intervene too late in the product lifecycle.

This session introduces a lifecycle-based quality paradigm in which anticipation replaces reaction, enabled by a new class of AI-driven execution and inspection technologies. Rather than treating quality as a downstream verification activity, this approach embeds quality intent directly into engineering definitions, work instructions, inspection logic, and task execution - creating a continuous, traceable link from design intent to physical outcome.

The presentation explains how hybrid artificial intelligence - combining deterministic, "white-box" reasoning with statistical learning - can generate structured, auditable knowledge models from engineering data, standards, and operational experience. These models dynamically produce execution and inspection plans, adapt rigor based on evolving risk, preserve institutional knowledge, and close learning loops across engineering, suppliers, production, and sustainment. Crucially, this technology does not replace quality professionals; it amplifies their judgment, consistency, and reach.

Drawing parallels to fast-moving yet highly regulated industries, the keynote illustrates how integrating execution, inspection, and learning into a unified lifecycle framework can reduce late rework, stabilize suppliers earlier, and support more predictable certification outcomes. The central message is clear: in an increasingly complex and resource-constrained environment, certification success depends not only on compliance verification but on how systematically quality intelligence is embedded into execution itself.

**Walter Stephan**

Aerospace Executive, Board Member,  
and Industry Advisor

**Mr. Walter Stephan** is a senior aerospace executive with more than 40 years of experience across commercial aviation, defense, and advanced manufacturing. He is the co-founder and former Chief Executive Officer of FACC AG, where he led the company for 27 years, growing it from a start-up into a global, publicly listed aerospace supplier serving major OEMs - including Airbus, Boeing, Bombardier, and Embraer - with revenues reaching approximately USD 750 million.

Throughout his tenure as CEO, Mr. Stephan was responsible for overall organizational performance, including quality, certification, and regulatory engagement. He worked closely with aviation authorities in Europe and the United States and guided the development of a mature aerospace Quality Management System, enabling FACC's quality organization to become a permanent member of the European Aerospace Quality Group (EAQG).

Since retiring from his executive role in 2016, Mr. Stephan has served as an independent advisor and consultant to aerospace and defense companies, supporting strategic transformation, supply-chain resilience, advanced manufacturing technologies, and the evolution of quality and certification models. He serves on multiple supervisory and advisory boards and is an advisor to SQA Services Inc.

Mr. Stephan holds a Master's degree in Composite Technology from the University of Leoben.

**Thibault Jongen**

CEO and Finance,  
Common Sense Robotics

A leader at the intersection of technology, engineering, and business, **Mr. Thibault Jongen** is recognized for steering companies toward measurable success with clear societal impact. As CEO of the Sabca Group from 2016 to 2024, he transformed the aerospace and defense company into a modern, competitive organization - expanding its business portfolio with major clients and positioning it as a tone-setter in the drone industry.

A strong advocate for maintaining and re-shoring industrial value creation, Mr. Jongen co-founded Common Sense Robotics, an ambitious startup that combines the power of generative AI with advances in robotics. The company develops task-and-motion intelligence software platform that automates manual work in manufacturing.

Mr. Jongen holds an engineering degree from the University of Louvain, a master's in fluid dynamics, and a PhD from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. His career also includes numerous awards, frequent public speaking engagements, and more than 45 scientific publications.

**Michael Guymon**

President and CEO, SQA Services, Inc.

**See Mr. Guymon's bio on page 17**



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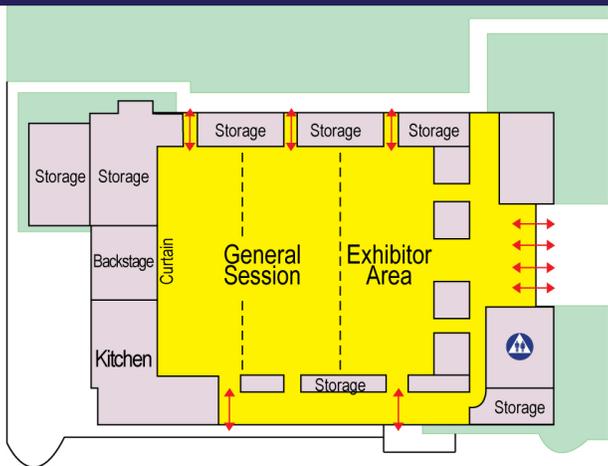
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