



# Indo-Pacific VANTAGE POINT

Educating, Connecting, and Empowering US, Allies and Partners

DKI APCSS Monthly Newsletter | January 2026



## Allies and Partners



## Honolulu Defense Forum: Challenges and Opportunities in the Indo-Pacific

Led and organized by the Pacific Forum, the Honolulu Defense Forum (HDF) 2026 convened over 600 senior leaders from the United States and allied nations in Honolulu from January 11-13. The event emphasized the importance of integrated solutions to address contemporary security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. Key discussions focused on enhancing credible deterrence, advancing networked architectures, and fortifying critical systems against multi-domain threats. The forum also highlighted the importance of leveraging information, artificial intelligence, and data for operational advantage, and revitalizing defense partnerships to strengthen regional security frameworks. The collective dialogue reinforced a shared commitment to tackling regional challenges and strengthening support for allies and partners.

The DKI APCSS Director, Suzy Vares-Lum, was honored to moderate a distinguished panel at the Pacific Forum's Honolulu Defense Forum. The panel, focusing on "Challenges and Opportunities in the Indo-Pacific," featured top military leaders from the Philippines, the United States, and Japan. The esteemed panelists included General Romeo Brawner Jr., Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; and General Hiroaki Uchikura, Chief of Staff of the Japan Self-Defense Forces.

[Read more](#)

## Readiness



### MARS Seminar Series Wraps Up in Honolulu

The Multinational Armaments Resilience Seminar (MARS), DKI APCSS' first Indo-Pacific-focused defense industrial base education program, concluded in January. The program included four one-week seminars held in Washington, D.C.; Japan; Australia; and Honolulu. Representatives from 14 countries explored ways to build a resilient defense industrial base, enhance deterrence, and strengthen national economies.

## Allies and Partners



### DKI APCSS unveils new Adjunct Program

DKI APCSS has created a new initiative to harness the expertise of leading academics, former senior military officers, former ambassadors, and other distinguished professionals to advance security cooperation and understanding in the Indo-Pacific region through an Adjunct and Distinguished Adjunct program.

[Read more](#)

## Readiness



### IPSEL SMEE Reaches Major Milestone

The Indo-Pacific Senior Enlisted Leaders Subject Matter Expert Exchange (IPSEL SMEE) will host its first in-region iteration in Brunei, June 22–26, 2026. Dr. James Minnich led a joint DKI APCSS–U.S. Indo-Pacific Command team in Brunei to coordinate event details with Force Sgt. Maj. Rozain bin Haji Pungut and his team. This milestone event will foster deeper collaboration and professional networks among senior enlisted leaders across the Indo-Pacific.

## Publications

### • Security Nexus

- [When Maps Begin to Move: How Symbols Fuel South Asia's Territorial Tensions](#)
- [Proximity, Perception, and Pushback in South Asia](#)

### • External Publications

- Dr. Lami Kim: [South Korea's Nuclear Latency May Be Washington's Least Bad Option \(Foreign Policy\)](#)
- Shyam Tekwani: [Sri Lanka's Civil War and the Limits of Literature \(New Lines Magazine\)](#)
- Shyam Tekwani: [The Crisis in Iran and India's Western Strategic Exposure \(The Wire\)](#)

- Dr. Alexander Vuving: [Vietnam Faces a Strategic Crossroads in 2026 \(East Asia Forum\)](#)

- **Reminder to download our recent book**  
[Edge of Competition: Disruption, Division, and Competition in the Indo-Pacific](#)

## Upcoming Courses

- **Mobile IPOC 26-2**  
April 6–10, 2026 (Washington, D.C.)
- **Transnational Security Cooperation (TSC)**  
TSC 26-1: July 12–17, 2026
- **Comprehensive Security Cooperation (CSC)**
  - CSC 26-2: May 6–June 10, 2026
  - CSC 26-3: Aug. 12–Sept. 16, 2026
- **IPSEL SMEE**  
June 22–26, 2026 (Brunei)

## Key Leader Engagement



### EAP/IPC Regional Ambassadors Conference

Assistant Secretary Michael DeSombre of the State Department's Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs met with chiefs of mission and chargés d'affaires from the EAP region at DKI APCSS in January. Discussions centered on effective coordination, key issues, and U.S. government priorities.



### Singapore Ministry of Defense delegation

### U.S. Ambassadors/DCMs/ Chargé d'Affaires

- Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Michael DeSombre.
- Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Affairs Paul Kapur
- Amb. Richard Buangan, US Ambassador to Mongolia
- Amb. Jennifer Johnson, US Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia
- Amb. Caryn McClelland, Brunei
- Amb. Pete Haymond, Charge d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy Indonesia
- Amb. Joel Ehrendreich, US Ambassador to the Republic of Palau
- Deputy Chief of Mission Courtney Beale, US Embassy in Vietnam
- Chargé d'Affaires Alex Berenberg (US Embassy PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu)
- Chargé d'Affaires Gregory D'Alesandro (US Embassy Majuro (Republic of the Marshall Islands))
- Chargé d'Affaires John Degory, U.S. Embassy Suva (Fiji).
- Chargé d'Affaires Joy Sakurai (US Mission to ASEAN)
- Chargé d'Affaires Douglas E. Sonneck (US Embassy Rangoon (Burma))
- Chargé d'Affaires Daniel Tarapacki, Samoa
- Chargé d'Affaires Bridgette Walker, Cambodia

## DKI APCSS Podcasts

- **Strategic Voices**
  - Episode 1: [Strategic Voices Episode 1 – India’s Grand Vision: Can Strategy Match Ambition?](#)
  - Episode 2: [Strategic Voices asks: What would nuclear-powered submarines actually change for South Korea’s deterrence, alliance politics, and maritime posture?](#)
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- **Dialogues**
  - Dialogue Episode 52: [Forging Fleets: ROK-U.S. Shipbuilding Cooperation and Sino-U.S. Maritime Competition](#)
- **Upcoming**
  - Dialogue Episode 53: Strategy in the Storm with Joe Martin. Feb. 5, 2026 at 4PM (HST) [Register online at this link](#)
  - Strategic Voices | Episode 3: Disruption, Division, Competition: What Shapes Security in the Indo-Pacific? Feb. 10, 2026 at 3PM (HST) [Register online at this link](#)

## Alumni Spotlight



**Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. (Philippines):** DKI APCSS alumnus (ASC 14-2) and chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines discusses his experiences and the enduring U.S.-Philippine alliance. [Watch the interview](#)



**Galle Dialogue - DKI APCSS** participated in the 12th Galle Dialogue International Maritime Conference as the sole U.S. panel speakers. Hosted by the Sri Lanka Navy, the event brought together senior maritime leaders from 36 countries and 14 organizations to discuss evolving security challenges under the theme, “Maritime Outlook of the Indian Ocean under Changing Dynamics.”

[Watch Video](#)

## Employment Opportunities

- Assistant/Associate/Full Professor (Defense Industry or Lawfare)  
Accepting applications through 3/17/2026.
- Assistant/Associate/Full Professor (Cyber, Artificial Intelligence,  
Disruptive Technology)  
Accepting applications through 3/17/2026.

[More information](#)



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