

# Bolstering S'pore's defence capabilities

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— Mr Peter Lim (right)



PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

DSTA's programme manager Peter Lim leads a team in developing simulators and training solutions for the SAF

by mike lee

MR PETER Lim, 41, gets great satisfaction working at the Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA), delivering engineering solutions that bolster Singapore's defence capabilities.

Six years since leaving the private sector for DSTA, he finds his work in DSTA to be more meaningful in contrast to working in the private sector, which focuses more on market share and profits, he says.

“Being able to contribute to our nation's defence is what gives me the greatest sense of accomplishment,” he says.

“My current work on simulators and training systems enables the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) to take its capabilities one step further. Advanced weapons and capabilities require a well-trained fighting force to operate them effectively.”

Mr Lim has been exposed to wide-ranging projects and technology, gaining numerous learning opportunities to build up not just his technical competencies, but also leadership and management skills.

He is now a programme manager at the Networked Systems Programme Centre, where he leads a team focusing on developing simulators and training solutions for SAF.

Collaborating in multi-disciplinary teams with colleagues from other expertise fields is common.

He explains: “My responsibilities are wide-ranging, challenging and yet interesting.”

“In a typical day, my work is varied and involves planning and designing defence systems, regular interactions and technical discussions with team members and DSTA's industry partners.”

His job takes him out of the office too, such as when he oversees the installation of advanced simulator systems on navy vessels or system sites, and ensures they are integrated well with existing onboard systems.

He supervises the testing too to ensure everything works smoothly and precisely.

## Sharing knowledge

Continual learning and development is essential to his work.

“We have to keep up with technological advancements and exploit the latest engineering developments so as to provide and enhance SAF's cutting-edge capabilities.”

“Lifelong learning and innovation are integral to our work and development in DSTA,” says Mr Lim

He was once entrusted with a project that encompassed engineering disciplines that were unfamiliar to him. It was a chance to learn and grow, which he appreciated.

DSTA has a knowledge-sharing culture where the experienced colleagues are always willing to share their know-how with the younger staff, and colleagues from other Programme Centres are open to sharing their expertise too.

Furthermore, DSTA empowers staff to chart their own career path through a personalised career development plan.

Promising engineers can sharpen their technical and managerial skills at world-renowned universities, under the DSTA Postgraduate Scholarship.

Last year, Mr Lim completed a Master of Science in software engineering at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

The studies also provided him with the invaluable chance to meet and learn from international peers in the defence industry.

## Lessons from the wild

Thinking outside the box is key to Mr Lim's engagement and enjoyment with his tasks at work.

An avid scuba diver who enjoys wreck diving, Mr Lim says that observing smaller sea creatures defend themselves against bigger predators has helped him visualise different defence techniques and their associated vulnerability.

Says the graduate with a master's degree in engineering from the National University of Singapore: “The prey often displays awesome defence mechanisms, such as agility, awareness, precision, deception and teamwork.”

“In some ways, these are similar to modern military concepts.”

Trekking and reading are other activities he enjoys.

He says such lifestyle balancing helps to clear his mind, to generate innovative ideas for a competitive advantage for the nation's defence.

“You need to have a higher purpose and the commitment to serve our nation,” says Mr Lim of the key qualities needed to excel in his work.

“Responsibility, impartiality, professionalism and teamwork are also important.”