

FUTURE ARMoured VEHICLES SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



An Interview with Niall Bolster, European Business Development Manager, Pleora Technologies

Ahead of this year's 4th **Future Armoured Vehicles Situational Awareness conference**, SMI group caught up with Mr Niall Bolster to discuss current developments, priorities and the upcoming event.

The Future Armoured Vehicles Situational Awareness conference will take place at the Copthorne Tara Hotel on the 3rd and 4th of April 2019 in London, UK.

For more information visit www.armouredvehicles-sa.com



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What is your role?

“I am the European business development manager for Pleora Technologies. Our company designs video networking hardware and software solutions that enable the delivery of real-time video and data over Ethernet to processors and displays. For the military market, I work primarily with integrators and equipment manufacturers designing local situational awareness system for ground-based vehicles. Our solutions are also widely deployed in mission-critical industrial automation, quality inspection, and medical imaging applications”.

What aspects of your work relate to armoured vehicles situational awareness?

“Leading manufacturers are designing our video interface solutions into local situational awareness systems for ground-based vehicles. We’re taking the lessons learned from our success in critical imaging applications for the industrial and medical markets to help military designers solve key challenges around real-time video networking. Military imaging applications are becoming more complex, with multiple cameras, sensors and displays feeding increasing amounts of data back to vehicle crew members. Our video networking solutions help manufacturers design fully networked imaging systems that support a broad spectrum of operations and work within multi-collation environments. We work with manufacturers so they develop imaging solutions that assist – rather than overwhelm – an already overburdened end-user”.

What will you be exhibiting at the Future Armoured Vehicles Situational Awareness conference?

“We will be exhibiting our video networking capabilities for local situational awareness imaging applications. We have a suite of off-the-shelf hardware solutions proven in the industrial automation market that are customized and ruggedized for military applications. This includes frame grabbers that convert existing imaging sources into Ethernet, and embedded hardware that speeds the design of standards-compliant specialized cameras. We will be exhibiting new ruggedized video converters and software SDKs that provide a simple and easy way to integrate existing image sources into a standards-compliant Ethernet network supporting both GigE Vision and Def Stan 00-82. We will show how these camera and monitor converters provide the foundation for an integrated situational awareness sensor network supporting complete video needs for on-board and dismounted soldiers. The unified sensor architecture we’re demonstrating serves the needs of traditional driver visual enhancement, 360 degree situational awareness and ISR applications”.

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What are you looking forward to when attending the SMi Future Armoured Vehicles Situational Awareness conference?

“The conference provides the latest updates on the armoured vehicle and situational awareness market from end-users, decision makers, and suppliers. As a networking event, we’ve had very good conversations with engineers and platform managers that have helped guide our product development to ensure we deliver solutions that benefit end-users”.

What new technology has caught your eye recently?

“The situational awareness market is quickly evolving, with increasing amounts of data available for end-users from an expanding number of cameras and sensors. One technology area that is interesting is the concept of a centralized architecture approach for vehicle communications systems. Previously, many of these systems operated independently. This resulted in usability and cost challenges when interfacing with other equipment, scaling the system, or adding functionality. It also added additional equipment in the vehicle and posed a single point of failure risk. With a centralized approach, vehicles essentially become mobile Ethernet networks. In-vehicle communications systems become more easily scalable, customizable to support different video and data inputs and outputs, and single point of failure exposure is removed to ensure reliable operation. Most important, this approach can help reduce complexity for crew members and lower costs for manufacturers”.

Any final thoughts about situational awareness?

“One often overlooked factor when designing new technology for the military market is the end-user. This is a high-pressure situation, and vehicle crew members need intuitive, easy-to-use tools that they can trust to operate in all conditions. There is a huge opportunity to deploy significantly better capabilities for situational awareness applications. One of the biggest learning curves for our company has been clearly understanding the end user, their pain points, and what they need to achieve under a variety of scenarios and mission needs. This is critical to delivering a product that is conceived and designed with a crew-centric approach”.

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