



## CAREERS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

# High-tech solutions

Working in DSTA allows Mr Hee Yong Siong to exercise his creativity

by suresh nair

MR HEE Yong Siong enjoys the challenge of coming up with creative solutions to engineer novel solutions and develop new-generation capabilities.

During the 13 years that he has been with the Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA), he has been given great exposure and opportunities to pursue his interest and develop his technical knowledge and skills.

His passion for engineering began when he was studying electrical and electronic engineering at a polytechnic. Since then, he has been particularly interested in software coding, which combines creativity with the opportunity to contribute solutions to practical problems.

The 40-year-old Programme Manager is responsible for Command and Control, Communications, Computer and Intelligence (C4I) solutions for the next-generation fighting vehicles in DSTA's Land Systems Programme Centre.

### Job satisfaction

According to Mr Hee, a career in defence engineering offers the chance to be exposed to cutting-edge technology, which he is very passionate about.

While jobs in disciplines like banking and law may seem more prestigious and in demand, personal interest and aspirations are important too, he says.

"The ability to do what I like and stay excited in the job is important. I'm glad that DSTA provides this excitement and supports continual learning through the projects I work on."

"The projects I work on in DSTA give me the space to explore and deliver creative and effective engineering solutions. This is what I enjoy most in my job. As the defence landscape changes, technical requirements have become more complex and demanding, which gives rise to many new challenges," he says.

His area of expertise is in developing and integrating the command and control systems for the Army.

"The highlight of my career at DSTA was delivering

I thrive in an environment where everyone is committed to achieve common objectives and deliver project success. In DSTA, that usually means delivering engineering systems that change the way the Singapore Armed Forces function and fight.

— Mr Hee Yong Siong, programme manager, DSTA

the Battle Management System for the Bionix II Infantry Fighting Vehicle.

"The system helps soldiers to stay connected and communicate with one another in real time on the battlefield, which is vital to mission effectiveness. It was a fulfilling project as my work got validated through trials," he adds.

Besides acquiring technical knowledge, he is also developing his leadership and project management skills. In addition, he learnt to empower and share his knowledge with junior team mates.

For instance, as part of his involvement in the technical team at the Design and Build Ruggedised Computer Competition last month, he engaged polytechnic students to understand the kind of work he does and felt it was interesting to see innovative ideas coming from the students.

### Support from all fronts

To Mr Hee, a career in defence engineering requires effort, tenacity, commitment, and sustained passion in engineering.

"The defence platforms and capabilities that you see is the result of numerous hours of planning and tapping the collective strengths of many engineers with different areas of expertise," he says.

The father of two boys, aged eight and five years, says the formula to succeed in juggling work, studies and parenting responsibilities lies in teamwork and strong support from colleagues and bosses.

Says Mr Hee: "I thrive in an environment where everyone is committed to achieve common objectives and deliver project success. In DSTA, that usually means delivering engineering systems that change the way the Singapore Armed Forces function and fight."

"While we may have to work long hours, the shared sense of purpose and the bonds we form keep me going. I like how my colleagues, as well as the DSTA management, are supportive when it comes to balancing work and family life."

He also thanks family support for the rise in his career. "My wife is very supportive and shares the pride of my work," he says. "Although she may not fully understand the scope of my work, she understands that there will be times when I have to work late or be out of the country."

Mr Hee feels that being rational is a quality that sums him up appropriately.

"I like to find a systematic way to a solution — find the steps to take to get me from where I am to my goals," he says.

"This quality is applicable to the engineering field as most engineering problems require a clear assessment of the situation — to keep cool, weigh the pros and cons, then systematically use methods and calculations to derive solutions."



PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG