



# From Pixie Dust to Mission Readiness

Why the Best Innovation Is Meant to Be Forgotten

Rahul C Thakkar

President

BAE Systems OneArc



# The Best Innovation is Meant to be Forgotten





Simulation is everywhere –  
From entertainment to  
consequence.



# What innovation is, and is not

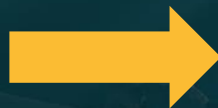
- Innovation is not

- Adding the newest commercial technology to a product stack.
- Checking the AI box.
- Putting a large language model into a workflow and calling it a breakthrough.
- A polished demo that fails when it meets integration, scale, accreditation, security, or operational constraints.

Real innovation changes  
what mission teams  
can do.



What can the  
technology do?



What does the mission  
want people to plan,  
learn, or do?



# The battlefield is too connected for disconnected simulation

## Silo

- Can the operator fly?

## Connected

- Can the operator fly?
- Can they coordinate with other force elements?
- Can the operator navigate relevant terrain?
- Can the operator avoid being detected by enemy cUAS capabilities?
- Can they adapt when the environment changes?
- Can they operate when comms degrade?



# Better together

operationalizing innovation  
takes an ecosystem





**AI**



# From Pixie Dust to Mission Readiness

Why the Best Innovation Is Meant to Be Forgotten

Rahul C Thakkar

President

BAE Systems OneArc



Thank you!