



Mr. Neer Barnhart

Major (Res.), Air Defense Expert & Industry Leader

Business Development & Operational Architect, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems

Mr. Neer Barnhart is a distinguished figure in the field of air defense, with over two decades of experience spanning both operational military service and cutting-edge defense industry leadership. A reserve officer with the rank of Major in the Israeli Air Defense Corps, he began his career commanding units equipped with Vulcan artillery and Stinger missiles. His military record includes active participation in multiple operations and wars, where he played critical roles in intercepting enemy aerial threats and supporting ground forces under fire.

Throughout his service, Mr. Barnhart was instrumental in developing and adapting combat doctrines to meet dynamic battlefield requirements. He served as a battery commander, a strategic doctrine advisor, and eventually led a combined Israeli-U.S. air defense cell in a joint operations center under the command of a four-star general.

Most recently, during Operation Iron Swords, he was tasked with establishing and operationalizing the SPYDER missile defense system under active combat conditions. His leadership directly contributed to intercepting a wide range of enemy threats and safeguarding key national assets.

For the past 17 years, Mr. Barnhart has served at Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, where he has contributed to the development and evolution of Israel's layered air defense architecture, including Iron Dome, David's Sling, SPYDER, and Barak. His expertise spans:

- **Operational Architecture** – Bridging the operational needs of end users with engineering teams to ensure field-relevant solutions.
- **Senior Systems Engineering** – Shaping advanced system capabilities through high-level design and integration.
- **ILS Engineering** – Driving supportability and lifecycle readiness in all phases of system deployment.
- **International Contracts & Alliances** – Managing multi-national partnerships and supplier networks for large-scale defense programs.

Mr. Barnhart is driven by a deep commitment to protecting lives and ensuring technological superiority in defense. He believes the future of air defense depends not only on advanced capabilities, but also on deep operational cooperation and shared strategic vision.

As a respected member of the seminar's expert panel, Mr. Barnhart brings a unique blend of field experience and technical insight. His perspective offers valuable contributions to the ongoing dialogue on layered Balkan air defense, interoperability, and cross-national defense collaboration.