

# Tracking . . .

## SMDC on track to provide full range of strategic, operational, and tactical space capabilities to future force



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By **LTG Joseph M. Cosumano Jr.**

**J**ohn Schaar, the futurist, once wrote, “The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created — created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.” Although this eloquent statement was not specifically written to describe the implications for the Army’s future role in Space, it does have great relevance for what the future can be . . . one full of great challenge and excitement.

### The Present is Prologue to the Future

Before turning to the Army’s future in space, it is meaningful to briefly recap our recent accomplishments. During the past three years, the Space and Missile Defense Command has been instrumental to the Army’s, and the Nation’s, role in space. SMDC soldiers deployed overseas and here at home on the front lines of the global war on terrorism and Operation Iraqi Freedom. We activated the 1st Space Brigade (Provisional), the highest-level Army unit with the word space in its name. The Army Space Program Office has been transferred to the PEO — Air, Space and Missile Defense, whose name was expanded to include space to give the Army a focal point for space-related acquisitions. We have also taken great strides in implementing the president’s vision regarding the Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS) and creating the architecture for effectively integrating theater and national missile defense, which because of its global nature, is highly dependent on space for its ultimate success.

And we are restructuring our headquarters functions to better execute the command’s new role as the Army Service Component Command (ASCC) to U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). As such, SMDC has been presented with significant opportunities in the planning

and coordination of all Army support in the new unified command’s mission areas of Space operations, global strike, global information operations, global integrated missile defense, and global C4ISR. As the Army service component, we will take the leading role in integrating space into all Army support to the combatant commanders and throughout the Army, as Space is part of the foundation for all these new global missions.

These accomplishments, only to cite a few, are clear testimony to the great relevance and contributions the Army has provided to the space effort. We will not, however, rest on our laurels.

### Looking to the Near Future

Looking to the near future, we will very shortly activate a Ground-Based Mid-Course Missile Defense Brigade and Battalion (GMD). This unit will assume command and control of the new GMD segment of the overall BMDS, which will employ layers of boost, midcourse and terminal missile defenses to protect the continental United States from the threat of a limited missile attack. We will also soon convert our 1st Space Brigade and Battalion to the first MTOE space units in the Army. And we are restructuring our headquarters functions to better execute the command’s new role as the Army Service Component Command to U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). All of this is, of course, in addition to our continuing missions of providing space support and expertise to the warfighting commanders; and our combat and materiel development, experimentation, analysis, and research and development activities that have put so many new technologies and products into the hands of our soldiers. Working in conjunction with other members of the national security space community, SMDC is on track to provide the future force a full range of strategic, operational, and tactical space capabilities.

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### **Roadmap to the Future**

In April 2003, we sharpened our vision of what space must do for the warfighters of the Future Force, when the Army Space Policy was approved by the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff, Army. This updated policy articulates the vital contributions space systems provide to national security and military operations. It also expresses the future as “a seamless space-to-soldier continuum of sensors, networks and information [as] the signature characteristic of well-integrated space with land force and joint operations.” The Army views space as a vertical extension of the battlefield and an integral part of the battlespace, truly the new high ground for military operations.

Integration of space force enhancements contributes to the ability to achieve the information superiority and full battlespace awareness necessary for full-spectrum dominance. Enabling ground commanders to operate on their own terms, at the time, place, and method of their choosing, robustly supports the Future Force to see first, understand first, act first, and finish decisively. These capabilities have been vividly demonstrated during recent combat operations, and will be shown to an even greater degree in the future. Clearly, the Future Force will provide combatant commanders with systems and capabilities far beyond those currently in use.

### **A few Predictions for the Future**

While much is unknown about how we will leverage space in future wars, it is almost certain our reliance on space will grow considerably. Here are some predictions on how we will use Space in the future.

- Many current ISR capabilities on manned aircraft will move to Space, however, not as many as we once thought because I think many now will migrate instead to multifunctional UAVs that are cheaper to operate and maintain, and easier to directly control.

- Every soldier will have access to satellite communications.
- We will know “real-time” where our soldiers are and Blue Force Tracking via systems like Grenadier Brat will become the norm.
- Nearly all (if not all) of our missiles and bombs will be guided by GPS.
- All personnel will be trained in the basics of space.
- Potential adversaries, recognizing our dependence on space, will develop and deploy systems to attack our space assets, associated ground elements, and the links between them. Therefore, we will have to develop appropriate defenses.
- To ensure we control the new high ground of space — just as we currently control the airspace and the seas — we will develop and deploy numerous space-control systems.

### **Conclusion**

In 1952, Dwight Eisenhower, the 34th President of the United States, said, “Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.” Significant events overseas and here in the United States over the past three years have brought home the insightful meaning of President Eisenhower’s words. From the days of being the first service in space, to becoming the first service in missile defense, and now taking on global responsibilities, SMDC is carrying on its tradition of providing trained and ready soldiers and “space age” technological advances. The men and women, soldiers, civilians and contractors of the SMDC family continue to lead the way and look forward to serving as the Army’s premier space activity as we Secure the High Ground.