

## Ceremony Marks Activation of 1st Space Brigade (Provisional)

By MAJ Laura Kenney

**P**ETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — A significant milestone in the history of Army Space Command took place April 11, with the activation of the 1st Space Brigade (Provisional) in a ceremony held at the Command headquarters here.

The ceremony marked the creation of the Army's first and only Space Brigade.

Currently, elements of the Brigade's three battalions are deployed in Iraq and the surrounding theater in support of Marine Expeditionary Force 1, V Corps, and Central Command.

"This activation represents a huge step forward in the normalization of Space," said LTG Joseph M. Cosumano, Jr., commanding general, U.S. Space and Missile Defense Command. "And what better time to do it, than during these historic times we find ourselves in, with Army Space forces deployed on critical missions, supporting the warfighters of Iraqi Freedom.

"The new 1st Space Brigade (Provisional) is the first and only Space Brigade in the Army. Army Space Command just marked its 15th birthday, although the history of the Army in Space is much longer than that. We've postponed celebrating that anniversary while our soldiers are in harm's way, but, this is still a great time to stand up the new brigade."

The ceremony began with the symbolic uncasing and unfurling of the Army field flag, marking the activation of a provisional unit. Colors for the 1st Space Brigade will be authorized once the brigade's status is made permanent. The Army field flag was then posted in the waiting empty stand, already flanked by the Army Space Command and three battalion flags. Then, while the official activation orders were read, Cosumano passed the formal, framed copy of the order to the Brigade Commander, COL David Shaffer.

The mission of the 1st Space Brigade, as detailed in the order, is to "conduct continuous, global Space



Above, COL David Shaffer, left, is charged with command of the 1st Space Brigade (Provisional) by U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command Commanding General, LTG Joseph M. Cosumano Jr. at the brigade's activation ceremony April 11. Observing the momentous event is CSM Reginald Ficklin, the command sergeant major of the brigade.

Opposite page, top, COL David Shaffer addresses the attendees at the activation ceremony of the 1st Space Brigade (Provisional).

Opposite page, bottom, LTG Joseph M. Cosumano Jr. and COL David Shaffer raise a saber as they prepare to cut the ceremonial cake during the reception to celebrate the brigade's activation. Photos by Dennis Plummer

support, Space control and Space force enhancement operations in support of U.S. Strategic Command and Supported Combatant Commanders enabling the delivery of decisive combat power."

Army Space Command officially came into being April 7, 1988. Its three battalions — the 1st Satellite Control Battalion, the 1st Space Bn., and the 193rd Space Bn., Colorado National Guard — provide satellite communications, force enhancement, and early missile warning to the warfighter.

Shaffer insisted that the honors of the day belonged not to him, as first commander of the first ever Space Brigade, but to that brigade's deployed soldiers, whom he and Brigade CSM Reginald Ficklin could only represent.

"Our soldiers are over there, as we speak, doing tremendous things. This ceremony is for them, as they sweat and work around the clock, helping the combatant commanders achieve the spectacular success they have," said Shaffer.

Cosumano extended a special welcome to another general officer attending the event, Air Force MG Mason C. Whitney, adjutant general for Colorado's Army and Air National Guard.

"We couldn't be doing the tremendous job we're doing, supporting the warfighter in current operations, without his people. Case in point, the 193rd Space Battalion, activated just before Sept. 11. What a great asset they have been. They, as well as their sister battalions, have been doing a magnificent job in supporting the warfighter, wherever he is deployed.

He continued, "It's taken us 15 long years to get here, and I for one appreciate the symbolism of having this ceremony here in our new building. We have former commanders present, who represent the blood, sweat, and tears it took to get us to this point, as we celebrate quietly, while our nation is at war.

"And make no mistake, we are a crucial part of that war effort. We've got Army Space Support Teams and Joint Tactical Ground Station sections, and a host of other elements providing communications, early missile warning — everything we have in terms of operational capability is involved in current operations.

"In Operation Desert Storm, we'd just begun offering the benefits of the Global Positioning System. Today, we're providing force enhancement and force protection. We've come a long way in 15 years, and the stand-up of this brigade today is an indicator of all the challenges we'll meet in the future," concluded Cosumano.

Shaffer addressed those future challenges.

"Today's activation as a provisional unit is a major step in the process to becoming a permanent Army unit. The great thing about today is that it opens the door to expansion. By increasing the size of the brigade, we increase the support we give to the warfighter.

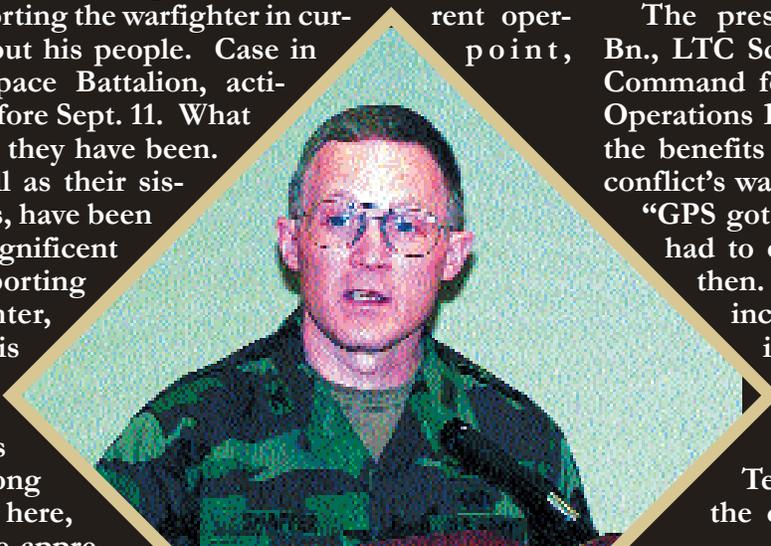
This ceremony, unlike that of a change of command which is all about welcoming a new commander and saying farewell to the outgoing, this ceremony is about the unit, about its soldiers, past, present and future," said Shaffer.

The present day commander of the 1st Space Bn., LTC Scott Netherland, has been in Army Space Command for much of its lifespan. As a captain in Operations Desert Shield and Storm, he demonstrated the benefits of the Global Positioning System to that conflict's warfighters.

"GPS got our foot in the door, showing what Space had to offer. We've come a long long way since then. Today's brigade activation marks the increase of our investment in Space — and it's a great day for Army Space Command and the warfighter," said Netherland.

Another long time member of the command, John Marrs, director of Technical Support, said, "I've been with the command since 1990. The command has

grown to its present size and mission completely in keeping with the vision held at its inception, that of providing the best Space has to offer the warfighter. Standing up the brigade will allow us to continue doing that, and growth is necessary to meet the increasing demand for Space capabilities. It's a fabulous day for



Army Space."

The ceremony ended with a ritual cutting of a celebratory cake with a saber held jointly by Cosumano and Shaffer.

Under Army Regulation, a provisional unit may be organized and designated by the commander of an Army field command. Provisional units may be organized for a limited period of time, not to exceed two years. At the end of the two-year period, the commander will make a recommendation whether or not to permanently organize the unit.