

1st Space Brigade (Provisional)

Brigade Operations During War

By LTC Scott Parks

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The 1st Space Brigade was provisionally activated on April 10, 2003, just prior to President Bush's pronouncement of the completion of major military operations in Iraq. However, prior to its provisional activation the Brigade had been performing Brigade command and control functions in support of preparations for war. Brigade personnel and capabilities from the 1st Space Battalion had deployed into theater as early as August 2002. By the completion of major military operations the Brigade had deployed five Army Space Support Teams (ARSSTs) (four active component teams, under 1st Space Battalion and one multi-component team under 193rd Space Battalion, Colorado Army National Guard), three rotations of personnel to the Test and Evaluation Detachment (two from 1st Space Battalion, and one from the 193rd Space Battalion), several Joint Tactical Air Ground Station (JTAGS) rotations, and numerous individual augmentees to Central Command and Special Operations Command. The brigade's support of its deployed forces followed those of a traditional brigade — Planning and Administration/Logistics.

The Brigade's planning support focused primarily on preparation of forces for operations. Initially, this was not significantly challenging given that early Space force requirements had been identified in the deliberate planning process and thoroughly exercised. However, as the plan for post hostilities evolved and the associated Space Forces requirements were reevaluated, demand for Space Forces outstripped the organic capabilities of the Brigade. This forced the command to look for other sources of personnel. The Brigade staff, in coordination with the G-Staff, battle-rostered two ARSSTs and one Test and Evaluation Detachment, from across the Brigade and SMDC Staffs. The battle rostering effort included soldiers from the SMDC-Battle Lab, A, B, C and D Companies, 1st Satellite

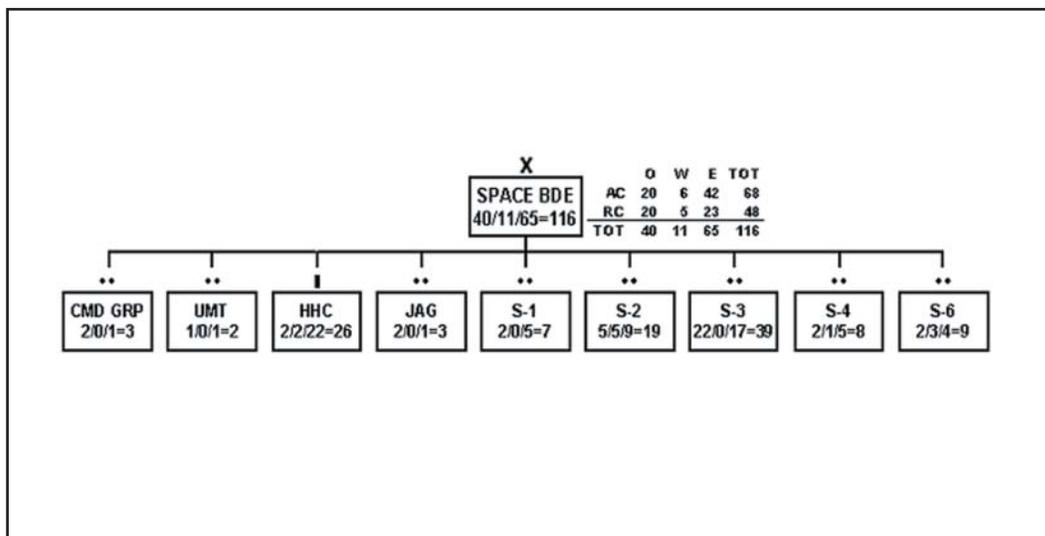
Control Battalion, Force Development Integration Center (FDIC) and the Space and Missile Defense Command Operations Center (SMDCOC). Personnel were gathered from geographically dispersed locations and provided training by 1st Space Battalion — augmented by contractors — under a compressed time schedule. Although not an optimal solution, the battle-rostered teams provided effective Space support to the warfighters.

Another major planning effort involved the rapid integration of a new ARSST tool, Space Support Element Toolset Light (SSET-Light), into ARSST operations. The Brigade S3 worked closely with the subordinate Battalions, G3, G6 and the SMDC-Battle Lab to determine requirements, CONOPS and a deployment scheme which supported operations. The system proved to be an exceptionally useful tool allowing transfer of large data files without taxing the supported unit's bandwidth. It also provided supported units additional NIPRNET bandwidth for administrative and morale purposes, when it was not being used for mission support.

Numerous logistics and administrative challenges were encountered in supporting our deployed Space forces.

One of the initial obstacles involved the shipment of replacement items to address equipment failures and routine resupply of ARSST specific materials not available in the standard Army supply system. Unlike short duration exercises or deployments to locations with robust logistic infrastructures — to include access to commercial vendors — OEF, and to a greater extent OIF, required in-depth logistics coordination. Shipments of outsized equipment and items requiring rapid delivery was not as simple as sending the items via FEDEX or DHL. For obvious reasons commercial shipment to Baghdad or Tikrit was not an option.

Figure 1
Space Brigade organizational design



Commercial shipment of supplies and equipment to Qatar, for example, is simple enough but moving it forward from there would require a command representative to transship the material to military transport. SMDC personnel operating in Qatar could perform this task, but this would take them away from their primary duties of supporting the warfighter. Utilization of the military transport and resupply system was the only viable solution. Our traditional dependence upon commercial transportation resulted in a steep learning curve when we were required to utilize the military transportation system to move our material to our deployed elements in early post-hostilities Iraq.

Another logistics challenge involved the lack of ARSST organic lift and mobility. All ARSST equipment, for four of the teams, was moved via shipping containers. Though not atypical of small support slice elements mode of operation, it did result in one team's equipment being left in Kuwait while the personnel moved forward. The team coordinated shipment of this equipment to their operations area, but it was a painful process. This lack of lift also contributed to the lack of mobility in the team's operational area and subsequently also affected their efforts for normal daily supply and administrative actions.

Under its provisional and pre-provisional status, the Brigade coordinated its support with a staff of no more than eight military, two Department of the Army civilians, and one contractor. This lean organization demanded close matrix support and coordination from both the higher G-Staff and our subordinate S-Staffs.

The future of the Brigade's support to operations and exercises hinges on the approval of the Force Design Update (FDU) and subsequent Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE), currently under review. The proposed structure for the Brigade make it a more self-sufficient organization capable of

providing support in new ways — which are intended to allow responsiveness via reachback to the Home Station Operations Center (HSOC) and forward via a deployable Operations Center. Under the proposed operational organization, the Brigade Staff swells to 68 active component soldiers and 48 reserve component soldiers (Figure 1 above).

Nested within this structure is Army Space Forces Command Operations Center (ASFCOC). The ASFCOC is a sub-element within the Brigade S3. It is designed to provide in-theater planning, coordination, and integration of Army Space Forces and Space control operations. The ASFCOC deploys into the theater of operations in support of the Army Forces commander or, if designated, the Joint Forces Land Component Commander, or Joint Forces Air Component Commander ensuring that Army Space operations are properly coordinated and integrated with those of joint and multinational forces. If directed to, the ASFCOC would provide joint C4I and coordination for all the service's Space Forces in theater.

One of the ASFCOC's primary missions will be to provide Army Space control planning and coordination support to the Joint Force Space Operating Authority (JFSOA). The Brigade Commander supported by his ASFCOC would also exercise authority as the Army Space Coordinating Authority. As such, the ASFCOC would likely be co-located with the JFSOA, or could be designated JFSOA, for that matter.

The ASFCOC could further support elements of the Joint war fight by placing FA40 LNOs with elements that require Space support, but are not generally provided an ARSST (i.e. Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force, 32nd AAMDC, etc). The LNOs could facilitate integration and provide exper-
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tise in areas such as Space Based Blue Force Tracking, Space Based Battle Space Characterization, Multi and Hyper Spectral Imagery, etc. The support provided could be tailorable based upon needs of the supported element, if expertise and planning support is the requirement, a single LNO may be appropriate. If products as well as expertise are required the LNO cell could increase, to include the requisite skill set.

A potential side benefit of having the Brigade Commander and his ASFCOC in theater is the ability to coordinate administration and logistics support to Space forces in theater. This support could include a Maintenance Contact Team(s) and a limited Prescribed Load List for ARSST, JTAGS, etc. This would facilitate maintenance and repair of Army Space unique equipment. Further, this administration and logistics cell could act as the focal

point for movement of supplies and equipment to forward elements. Operation Iraqi Freedom provided 1st Space Brigade (Prov) numerous lessons ranging from how to integrate and deploy new tools, to the necessity to train logistics as well as Space. These lessons must be used to develop the future roles and doctrine for Brigade and Battalion forward and homestation elements.

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mum accountability of ORHA personnel traveling in a somewhat unstable environment. The other Space force enhancement area that was of value to this mission was monitoring of Space environment and passing information on scintillation and possible communications disruptions to the C6. Navigational accuracy charts were of little or no value.

Because of the unique nature of this mission, task organizing the follow-on ARSST should be considered. This mission is obviously imagery intensive and requires an experienced spectral analyst as well. In this case, because the team is in a hardened facility with a well-established communications network, we should consider organizing a follow-on team that is imagery/spectrally heavy and lighter on the communications side. In fact, the command should consider task organizing all ARSSTs rather than establishing a hard and fast structure. The old phrase, Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops and Time available (METT-T) has merit when planning for the deployment of teams.

Shifting from the personnel/production side of things to equipment issues, there were a couple of significant problems identified during this deployment. First and foremost, EVERY piece of equipment developed or purchased by the Battle Lab

(BL) must be worldwide deployable. It is imperative that all equipment is 110/220 V capable as well as 50/60 Hz capable. We encountered significant problems getting our equipment up and running because so much of it was designed for use in a 110 V, 60 Hz environment. We had to purchase additional uninterrupted power supplies, transformers, and power sources to get everything operational. Not only did this cost money, but valuable time as well.

The other equipment issue identified was the inability to access the SIPRNET on the SSET-Light. The SSET-Light is an excellent communications package if a team only requires NIPRNET connectivity. However, in order to access the imagery data (unclassified or classified), both through NIMA and the SORC, teams must have SIPRNET access. Having to depend on another agency to provide that connectivity cost us very valuable time and significantly delayed our initial production timeline. Download times for image scenes were also lengthy because the bandwidth of the established SIPRNET network was not designed to accommodate large image files. Expanding each team's bandwidth (not sharing a single transponder) and pushing for independent SIPRNET access via the SSET-Light are necessary changes to

the team's communications capability.

In retrospect, we did educate ORHA, its components, and the maneuver units conducting military operations in the area on the support Space can provide to post-hostilities and stability and support operations. In fact, we educated them so well that to date we have produced and distributed more than 2,500 products, both image and geographic information systems. We developed image maps and photos for reconstruction projects, force protection plans, and military raids and operations. Where there was no map support, we created it, and we created it very quickly. We also revalidated the need for Blue Force Tracking, and provided assistance to the C2 and the C6. However, along the way, as almost always happens, we were educated as well. We learned the value and importance of partnering. We clearly validated the need for the Eagle Vision capability. We conducted a non-doctrinal mission in a new environment and learned to make Space capabilities provide significant value added. We examined personnel structure and equipment issues. We took up the "gauntlet" and accepted the challenge, became better Space operators, and proved the value of Space to full spectrum military operations.