

Command Update

Space is the Platform for the Way Ahead



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I have heard some recent rumblings about SMDC being solely focused on the initial deployment of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense, or GMD, system. FA40s and perhaps others are wondering, what has happened to Space emphasis? Well, that made me think that perhaps a Space update was in order.

Yes, we have been focusing a lot of effort on fielding the GMD system. President Bush gave us a deadline of September 30, 2004, to have the system up and ready for “initial defensive operations.” That is two years ahead of schedule. We have stood up the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD) and 49th Missile Defense Battalion. Our recruitment and training efforts are on track, and system and crew certification plans are developed and being test-driven. With the hard work of a lot of people, we will meet the President’s deadline.

But, I want to assure you all that we have been equally involved in the dynamic role of bringing Space to warfighters, and I believe it is time we gave everyone an update. Let me start with the good news of Space organizations. As I write this, we are nearing final approval of the table of organization and equipment, or TOE, for our 1st Space Brigade and two Space companies, one of which is the Space Control Company. This follows on the heels of the approval of the Space battalion’s TOE last year. As a result, we are beginning to flesh out these skeletal organizations that have done yeoman’s work the past few years deploying Space forces around the world. This was not done without challenges. One of the questions we discussed was why an FA40 should command the Space Brigade and Space Battalion? After all, FA40 is in the information operations career field, not the operations career field, and those in the non-operations career fields should not command. Interesting argument. Our counter argument is that commanders must have a good understanding of their Soldiers’ business. As such, it has to be an FA40. With the Army G-3 concurrence, we have developed a two-year study plan to determine

the “right” way to command these units in the future.

As always, our small but energetic cadre of Space professionals on the SMDC/ARSTRAT staff has been safeguarding the warfighters’ interests with respect to Space systems. For example, their vigilance has led to real consideration of direct downlink and theater tasking for the Space-based radar constellation. This has been complemented by some leading edge studies conducted by the SMD Battle Lab that demonstrate the powerhouse capability this system could bring to deployed Soldiers. Likewise, we are equally involved with the fielding of Space-based Infrared System, or SBIRS and the mobile multi-mission processor to ensure that the next generation of missile warning systems delivers the capabilities we need.

Our G-6 team has been overextended as usual. They are deeply involved in transformational communications efforts and are the system experts for the fielding of the Wideband Gapfiller Satellite. Just one of those satellites has the communications capacity of the entire Defense Satellite Communication System constellation. Our team has been putting their heads together with others in the field and on the staff to determine how to best expand satellite communications to the field today — from strategic to tactical users. All this ties in with “learning” our lessons from Operation Iraqi Freedom, and building on the Chief of Staff, Army’s vision of rapidly infusing tactical units with capability in the near future.

The SMDC Force Development and Integration Center, or FDIC, has embarked on developing requirements documents for our first-ever solely Space-related systems. These are joint efforts, unique to the Army, which will deliver Space control capability to the theater in the future.

The SMD Battle Lab currently is managing the U.S. Strategic Command sponsored joint Blue Force Tracking situational awareness advanced concept technology demonstration. LTC Greg Palka’s team is searching for a universal translator that will take the 15-17

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sources of Blue Force data now shipped into a theater, and combine it into one tactically relevant picture that feeds the commander's common operating picture. Our Blue Force Tracking Mission Management Center still provides world-class support to deployed forces, and under Floyd Light's dynamic efforts, is seeking to expand the current role. Most recently, we have experimented with integrating Force Battle Command Battalion, or Force XXI Battle Command, Brigade-and-Below data for units within the continental United States into a command operating picture.

Additionally, the Battle Lab is managing the high altitude airship advanced concept technology demonstration. This effort could revolutionize our use of "near" Space by flying airships close to the edge of the atmosphere. The list of the potential uses of this system is long, and the success of the joint land-attack cruise missile defense elevated netted sensor system project office's multiple deployment of aerostats to Afghanistan and Iraq have helped overcome a natural bias against using airships. Maneuver commanders who have seen an inkling of the aerostat's contributions in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom have become fans. Today's ships have electro-optical/infrared sensors. Tomorrow's suite is limited only by payload and imagination: radars, ISR systems, communications relays, etc.

Your Space Soldiers have deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, and some are still overseas. We recently welcomed back Army Space Support Team 12 from Baghdad. These are great Soldiers from the 193rd Space Battalion, Colorado Army National Guard. Still deployed is ARSST Team 3 with Joint Task Force 7 in Baghdad. Our senior Space officer in theater is LTC Todd Day in Iraq. He has been doing a super job since he took the battle hand off from LTC Elizabeth Kuh who spent nearly a year in Iraq writing the textbook on Space support to Phase IV of combat operations.

We are not standing still. The Space Brigade has led a determined effort these past seven months for developing future concepts for deployable Space forces into theater. These concepts entail ensuring horizontal integration of Space throughout the theater by deploying an Army Space element from the

Space Brigade or Battalion to the Joint Force Air Component Command in addition to adding more robust support to the Joint Forces Land Component Commander. These concepts will be experimented within the Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment (JFEX) '04 this summer and the Ulchi Focus Lens '04 exercise in the fall.

As the Army transforms today, Space forces are also transforming. The FDIC in concert with our liaisons at the Training and Doctrine Command and the Combined Arms Center are finalizing plans for Space Support Elements organic to the UEx and UEy — future employment headquarters. This summer we are manning our first Space Support Element in the 3rd Infantry Division. We are busy determining the type of equipment they will need to be successful when they show up.

This recap just touched the tip of the iceberg, and I readily confess it does not discuss much about the dynamite work our Space professionals are doing outside SMDC proper. FA40s in the National Security Space Architect office and the National Security Space Integration office are plotting the new National Security Space Office. We are making a difference with our FA40s around the world right now. We hope our FA40 conference scheduled for June in conjunction with the Long Beach AUSA session will give us an opportunity to share our own tales of Space support to warfighters.

The list of command-wide efforts goes on and on. I have barely addressed the work done by the SMDC Tech Center and Office of Technical Integration and Interoperability in building and developing a joint single integrated Space picture — a necessary advancement in situational awareness and command and control.

Every aspect of the GMD mission I mentioned at the top of this article is dependent upon Space today and the future for early warning, communications, surveillance and interception. Other warfighters are becoming more dependent on Space-based assets that affect their weapon systems. Those assets will play a critical role in winning our nation's wars and you dedicated Space professionals will ensure that the warriors have access to them.