

New colors, new era for 1st Space Battalion

By Karen Butler

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — In an early morning ceremony July 8, the 1st Space Battalion officially unfurled its new battalion colors after casing the colors of yesterday. Additionally, the officers and Soldiers of 1st Space Battalion replaced their unit crests of old with gleaming new ones.

“This is a significant milestone for Army Space Forces. We’ve come a long way in the last year in manning, equipping and fighting the battalion,” said LTC Jeffrey Farnsworth, battalion commander.

“The guidons and the battalion colors are a fitting tribute to that effort and accomplishment. This is a new chapter in the organization, so it’s fitting that our Space Warriors have a new set of colors and guidons as they advance forward to secure the high ground,” he said.

The “new chapter” Farnsworth speaks of is the change-over from a TDA- (Table of Distribution and Allowances) type organization to a full-fledged “go to war” MTOE (Modified Table of Organization and Equipment) organization.

The TDA organization was first activated Dec. 15, 1999.

The battalion’s existence signified an important commitment by the Army to fully embrace Space operations as a core competency for the force. The battalion was formed to provide an operational headquarters for command and control of the Army Space Forces.

Its original mission was to provide existing and emerging Space support to U.S. Forces and to provide in-theater, tactical ballistic missile warning. It accomplished its mission through the Army Space Support Company, the Theater Missile Warning Company, and a Headquarters Company.

The mission expanded to include conducting Space control operations in support of the United States and Allied Forces with the addition

of the Space Control Detachment as a subordinate unit of the battalion in April 2001.

The MTOE-organized 1st Space Battalion has a proud, if relatively short, history. The organizational transformation, however, has been transparent in completing the mission. Constituted May 23, 2003, as 1st Space Battalion and activated Oct. 16, 2003, the 1st Space Battalion is comprised of four subordinate companies — Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 1st Space Company (Theater Missile Warning) and 2nd Space Company (Army Space Support). Additionally, a provisional company was formed and designated as 3rd Space Company (Provisional).

HHC, 1st Space Battalion is responsible for deploying and redeploying the battalion’s command and control element (ASCE) and standing up the rear detachment support operations (HSOC) in support of national crises, major deployments or contingency operations.

The HHC staff is also responsible for conducting administrative, intelligence, operational, logistical and signal support to its subordinate companies and detachments deployed and



Commanders of the 1st Space Battalion stand in front of their new colors. *Photo by SSG Kipp Wilson*

assigned to the Central Command (CENTCOM), European Command (EUCOM), Pacific Command (PACOM) and Northern Command (NORTHCOM) areas of operation.

1st Space Company (Theater Missile Warning) consists of three detachments and six Joint Tactical Ground Stations/Multiple-Mission Mobile Processor (JTAGS/M3P) sections located in Qatar, Korea, Germany, two each at Fort Bliss, Texas, and one in Colorado Springs, Colo.

The forward deployed sections in Qatar, Germany and Korea provide 24-hour theater missile warning to CENTCOM, EUCOM and PACOM. JTAGS-CENT and JTAGS-EUR both provided missile warning and other Space-based infrared support to coalition forces during OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. One section in Texas and one in Colorado Springs serve as contingency forces ready to deploy as needed. Additionally, the JTAGS section in Texas is responsible for training all JTAGS operators via the Individual Qualification Training Course.

The recently enacted M3P section is tasked with the initial training and testing of what will be the JTAGS replacement system, the Multi-Mission Mobile Processor which is due to begin fielding during the first quarter of FY06.

2nd Space Company (Army Space Support) has five active-duty and four reserve Space support teams. Every Army Space Support Team (ARSST) has deployed in support of OPERATIONS ENDURING AND IRAQI FREEDOM. Missions included support of the Combined Forces Land Component Commander, V Corps, 4th Infantry Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and the Joint Special Operations Task Force-North. The ARSST also supports numerous exercises spanning the globe.

3rd Space Company (Provisional) was created Dec. 1, 2003, as a provisional organization based on a future Space Control (electronic) company to be activated Oct. 1, 2005. 3rd Space Company's mission is to deploy globally in support of Space control and information operations by providing ground mobile surveillance and assessment of Space systems, as well as airborne test and evaluation of command, control and information systems.

The company's predecessor has deployed in support of OIF/OEF, conducting Space control missions from October 2001 to March 2003. 3rd Space Company has supported and continues to support numerous joint exercises. The company will begin fielding its interim Space control system in November.

To conclude the ceremony, Space Warriors of 1st Space Battalion, removed the old crest from their berets and replaced it with the new unit crest. Unit crests are designed specifically to represent the mission of an organization.

"It was certainly an honor to take part in the ceremony," said MAJ Annette Merfalen, commander, of the 3rd Space Company (Provisional). "It served as a motivational event in that it reminded those present of our historical background and the significance of unit colors. It also served as a reminder for us to recognize that it takes a team

to succeed, and that a team ought to stand together, unified by our colors."

This event has its roots in the earliest of times, when warriors used banners to identify specific units and to serve as rallying points for troops. In medieval days, the banner was used to signal a general assault, which was generated by the command "advance your banners." 1st Space Battalion's colors and company guidons represent the start of a new era of tradition and service for this unit and its future Soldiers.



MAJ Annette Merfalen, commander 3rd Space Company and 1SG Robert Miller, unfurl their new colors. Photo by SSG Kipp Wilson

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