

Let's Talk



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By COL Roger F. Mathews

I consider myself a lucky man. I've just reported for a dream assignment as the deputy commander for operations at the Army's proponent for Space and integrated missile defense in beautiful Colorado Springs, Colo. Even as I smile with joy over my good fortune, I look forward to the challenges ahead.

This command, as you know, is responsible for more than just Space operations. We represent the Army's interests and support to U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) in all their mission areas: integrated missile defense, global strike, information operations, elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR).

The SMDC/ARSTRAT G-3 Plans and Exercise Division is aggressively coordinating with the Army's force providers, outside this command, to ensure that if the Army has capabilities that can support USSTRATCOM's mission areas, that they are offered up to USSTRATCOM and that they are written into the operations and concept plans. While the entire Army provides forces for these mission areas, not just SMDC/ARSTRAT, a common denominator to all of them is Space. From the vantage point of a former user of Space assets, I can assure you that your actions to optimize Space-based assets across the warfighting spectrum are important. When I commanded the 69th Air

Defense Brigade, my unit depended on Space-based products: Joint Tactical Ground Station detection of missile events, satellite communication support for command and control, delivery of phone service, Non-Secure Internet Protocol Router Network and Secret Internet Protocol Router Network, Global Positioning Systems for positioning and firing accuracy, and imagery products to enable rapid deployment and support situational awareness. Our challenge is to continue to assess how to use Space-based assets to best enable mission success across the full spectrum of mission sets the Army is called on to provide.

While the command has taken on all the mission areas listed above, it has continued to push ahead with its responsibilities as the Army's proponent for Space and has developed innovative ways to optimize Space forces support to the combatant commanders. Over the last 18 months, the SMDC/ARSTRAT Directorate of Combat Developments Space Support Element (SSE) "Trail Boss," supported by the Future Warfare Center's Battle Lab has embedded Space support elements into the Army's deploying divisions. This initiative to place Space-based capabilities into the operational formations closer to the Soldier on the ground is a direct result of forward thinking Space professionals who identified a gap in our current operational capabilities and in conjunction with supported warfighters convinced the Army leadership that this investment

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The new Theater Space Support Concept is another example of Space professionals figuring out how to best use Space forces. (See Fall 2005 ASJ for more details). One of the most immediate challenges is to continue this trend of making the most of the Army's Space forces to foster the growth of the Space cadre.

Because Space is so critical to the success of Army missions, it is imperative that the Army builds a “bench” of trained and ready Space professionals to meet its needs, and fulfill its responsibilities to the Department of Defense and the joint community. Over the last two years, SMDC Future Warfare Center's Directorate of Combat Developments (DCD) has completed a Force Management Analysis (FORMAL) to determine the best way to ensure that the Army has that “bench” of Space cadre. Under the course of action that COL Tim Coffin, Director of Combat Developments, briefed to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Richard A. Cody on Jan. 4, 2006, the Space cadre will grow from the approximately 160 Space professionals (Functional Area 40s) to over 1,500 personnel.

It will include all military and civilian Space professionals and Space enablers. Space professionals are those whose principal duties include planning, developing, resourcing, acquiring, integrating, or operating Space forces, concepts, applications or capabilities. Space enablers are those whose primary career field is not Space, but who perform unique tasks or functions or may require skills to apply Space capabilities and who would need supplemental Space training that directly relates to their duty positions. Bringing this

initiative to reality is going to be the challenge.

I also challenge the entire Army Space community to continue looking for new, innovative ways to support Army and joint warfighters, and as directed, civil authorities. Talk with each other through any means available. Use the Space Operations Network (SONET). I will ask the FA40 Proponency Office to set up video-teleconferences to facilitate the dialogue. I encourage you to write articles for this journal about the programs you are working on and to provide issues or suggestions for the Space community to discuss. Pick the minds of Space professionals outside the Army and figure out what this command and the Army can incorporate that will better serve warfighters. Together we have ample opportunity and room to continue growing and maturing every aspect of Space operations. With Soldiers serving in harm's way around the world, our support was never more needed than it is now.

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur said, “A good Soldier, whether he leads a platoon or an army is expected to look backward as well as forward; but he must think only forward.” I think that is a good thought to close with. From what I've seen so far, the Army's Space operations community has done just as GEN MacArthur intoned. We will continue to do just that. Together we will continue to think forward and discover new ideas, concepts, tactics, techniques, procedures and equipment that will help us meet the challenges to better serve Army and joint warfighters. I am looking forward to meeting each one of you and working with you.