

# Command In Brief

# ARMY'S 1ST SPACE BRIGADE GETS NEW COMMANDER

By Ed White





PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — COL Timothy R. Coffin assumed command of the 1st Space Brigade from the unit's outgoing commander, COL Kurt S. Story as COL Roger F. Mathews passed the brigade's colors to the new commander during a July 27 ceremony.

"Since November, 2002 units of the brigade have been deployed continuously in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Mathews. "The Army Space Support Teams, Commercial Exploitation Teams, and JTAGS (Joint Tactical Ground Station) crews have rotated Soldiers but the units have remained. And Soldiers have returned to these locations after short stays in the United States between rotations. This continuous record of excellence could only have been accomplished by a team of seasoned, well-trained warriors who live the Army values and epitomize the Warrior Ethos."

"The 1st Space Brigade stands before you a combat proven force that has met and continues to meet every mission. This brigade is as it is because of the great dedication from an exceptional team led by Colonel Kurt Story," Mathews added. Mathews, deputy commander for operations, U. S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Command (SMDC/ARSTRAT) hosted the ceremony for the 1st Space Brigade, which is the operational element of SMDC/ARSTRAT.

"Over the last two years the Soldiers of the 1st Space Brigade have exemplified these words (contained in John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech) in their continued outstanding support to the Global War on Terrorism. In addition to its fixed-base, 24/7 operations, the brigade supported numerous combatant commander exercises and maintained a continuous forward deployed presence in the CENTCOM (U.S. Central Command) AOR (Area of Responsibility) providing direct support to the 'boots on the ground' warfighter."

The quote from JFK's 1961 inaugural address reads, "we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success

of liberty."

In his remarks Coffin said, "The 1st Space Brigade mission remains unchanged. It is to conduct continuous Space force enhancement, Space support, and Space control operations supporting U.S. Strategic Command and supported combatant commanders, enabling and shaping decisive operations."

The 1st Space Brigade has three one of a kind battalions, the 53rd Signal Battalion (Satellite Control), the 1st Space Battalion and the Colorado Army National Guard Space Support Battalion. The 53rd Signal Battalion has the mission of providing dependable, secure, long haul satellite communications to U.S. warfighting forces around the world and a variety of government agencies. This battalion provides 80 percent of the in-theater satellite communications for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

The 1st Space Battalion has had a continued presence in Iraq since the beginning of the war. The deployed Soldiers have provided Space products that enhance both planning and operations for all forces within the region. The Colorado Army National Guard Space Support Battalion is also unique in that it is a National Guard element also with Soldiers deployed to the Middle East and supporting warfighters with products and capabilities from Space. One of the unique features of this brigade is that it is composed of Active Duty, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers.

Products provided by the brigade to the warfighting commands include: Space weather and its constantly changing effects on satellites, communications and Global Positioning System accuracy; satellite imagery in the form of maps and 3-dimensional fly-throughs of terrain; early warning of missile attacks and satellite communications in a seamless grid allowing all levels of command to talk to each other whenever necessary. Under Story's leadership the brigade has grown from about 450 Soldiers in 2004 to nearly 600 today and the brigade will reach its full compliment of personnel at over 1,300 in 2011.