



Attendees of the 2008 Space Operations Symposium listen intently to issues presented during the conference. Photo by DJ Montoya

Knowledge Manager

The requirement for a knowledge manager is centered on the fact that networking and information sharing across the Army Space community is not standardized and leads to a loss of collaboration benefits to support Space missions. This position and associated duties is vital to the growth of the community's professional expertise and dissemination of mission related information. There is a clear need for a professional focal point for resources. It is reasonable for U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, as the Army's designated proponent for Space, to lead this effort and resource it appropriately.

Collaboration Portal

The lack of a Space collaboration and resource portal impedes the ability of FA40s (particularly Space Support Elements and Army Space Support Teams), as well as other operational Space elements, from sharing and building upon best practices. Continuity of information during personnel transitions and the ability to post or pull current Space-related policies and doctrine also suffers from the lack of a common information sharing resource that is Web-enabled and accessible with differing levels of security. There was consensus that Army Knowledge Online-Secret (AKO-S) is a viable option to start this effort based upon its ease of access and manageability. In addition, an ability to alert members via a distribution list to provide key updates or news was considered an important feature. MAJ Joe Guzman has already initiated an informal Space Operations Officer Collaboration site on AKO-S and the Future Warfare Center's Directorate of Combat Development has training references available at their portal on SIPRNET. Command sponsorship of a common portal with a dedicated manager to maintain this focal point is a desired end state to formalize this capability and further empower the community.

Senior Leader Space Training

Despite advances in our cadre training, it was the consensus of the group that senior operational leaders would benefit from operationally focused Space capabilities training and education. The purpose includes developing the expectations of Space professionals and ensures they advocate integrating them into battle staff processes. For example, as a commander or S-3 becomes more understanding to request Space assessments or Space-enabled products, the ability of the FA40 to integrate and provide relevant and responsive support is greatly enhanced. The commander's personal interest can often be the impetus needed to ensure Space professionals are leveraged to work Space issues and requirements versus non-Space related tasks. Senior FA40s offered to the group that while leader training will help, it remains the FA40s' individual responsibility to properly engage and contribute at key planning and execution times to establish credibility and demonstrate value-added. Discussion also included the perspective that without senior leader education the Space community remains routinely challenged to offer a full range of expertise.

FA40 Placement

The consensus of attendees included the issue of improving FA40 officer placement at key nodes of influence in the Army and Joint community. The concept of Key Developmental positions was explored; however, to establish them at this stage lacked clear value given the uniqueness of various positions and their associated scope of impact to Space operations. While most FA40s felt Joint assignments at combatant commands were of tremendous benefit to learn the operational level of warfighting, they also agreed



1st Space Battalion CSM James Ross speaks with other attendees at the 2008 FA40 Space Operations Symposium. Photo by DJ Montoya

FA40 placements are a delicate balancing act between strategic and operational areas (e.g. policy and capabilities development) and the importance of supporting tactical operations. A blend of experiences from tactical to strategic levels seems to provide the best foundation for an FA40 Officer, although that goal is limited by a perceived shortfall in the number of Space professionals available. Given this environment, some felt strongly that allocation of Space professionals should not be treated with a handwave “coordinate and integrate” but be based upon hard task analysis prior to utilization in a particular position. When LTG Kevin T. Campbell, commanding general, USASMDC/ARSTRAT was asked about FA40 placement and career management, his advice was that our progression would continue to be shaped and influenced by developmental experiences because no one school can completely prepare an FA40 Officer.

NCO and Warrant Officer Career Progression

A key shortfall identified is that we need a path and plan to keep our total community of professionals in the Army contributing to the mission. Currently, there is a perception that Soldiers with Space expertise cannot go back to their basic branches and serve without disadvantage. However, staying in Space related positions is not always feasible despite critical skills that are in high demand and time consuming to train. The forum collectively felt we owe the Noncommissioned Officer and Warrant Officer Corps a Space Professional path and sufficient opportunities for education and advancement. If we do not nourish this backbone of our community we jeopardize our ability to recruit and retain the best.

One comment was that the Noncommissioned Officers are “getting scraps” when it comes to educational opportunities. All agreed this must change with Space Cadre coded positions and Key Developmental positions for our Soldiers. All Noncommissioned Officers would attend formal classes as part of skills certification. During the forum wrap-up, the Deputy Commanding General for Operations, then-COL Kurt S. Story advised the group that as we achieve Phase III of the Cadre Implementation Plan, we can truly shape the training requirements. The commanding general advised that while the gap needed to be fixed we also had an obligation to return these Soldiers to their basic branches.

Reserve Soldier Career Paths

One FA40 officer asked for the command to assess developing a career path and progression opportunities for Reserve Soldiers and a potential future Reserve element in Huntsville, Ala. The idea was accepted as important to further assess. Finally, there was a suggestion to assess 01A slots, particularly at U.S. Strategic Command, and determine if they could be coded for FA40s.

The forum was well attended and the issues were explored openly in a non-attribution environment. To ensure the issues are truly addressed, the command leadership is tracking most of these issues and suggestions as staff taskings for follow-up assessment and reporting. The FA40 community anticipates an equally productive session for the next conference and feedback on these long term actions to improve our ability to collectively contribute to our supported organizations missions. Be sure to be there! 🚩