



JFCC IMD

# U.S. Strategic Command's



## Joint Enabler for Integrated Missile Defense

By U.S. Navy Cmdr. Chris Walker

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE. Colo. — On Apr. 5, 2009, as North Korean launch controllers counted down to the lift-off of a Taepo Dong 2 (TD-2) missile purported to be carrying a satellite payload into orbit, half a world away in Colorado Springs, Colo., members of the Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense, part of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), were closely monitoring U.S. systems capable of detecting and tracking the North Korean launch.

The Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense (JFCC IMD), a tenant unit, located on Schriever Air Force Base, is a functional component of USSTRATCOM. Commanded by U.S. Army LTG Kevin T. Campbell, JFCC IMD is a Joint command comprised of active duty and reserve members of all four military services. Additionally, the JFCC IMD is supported by a variety of Department of Defense and Defense Intelligence Agency civilians and civilian contractors.

As the TD-2 lifted off the pad in North Korea, several months of intensive planning paid off as a well-exercised Joint team monitored the launch and provided situational awareness to the USSTRATCOM Commander.

“Our planning staff and operations center folks performed superbly,” commented Deputy Commander of JFCC IMD, CPT Jeff Bartkoski. “As we go through an event like this, we will be able to leverage past experiences to further enhance our capabilities. As ballistic missiles continue to proliferate, it becomes increasingly important that we mature our ability to protect our homeland as well as our deployed forces, friends and allies.”

Primarily responsible for missile defense planning and management, JFCC IMD is known as the Global Synchronizer for Missile Defense. JFCC IMD enables USSTRATCOM to synchronize combatant commander (COCOM) operational and tactical level planning efforts. IMD personnel also make employment recommendations for the allocation of low-density/high-demand missile defense forces and elements to

meet COCOM operational needs. In order to accomplish its global mission, IMD coordinates regularly with other COCOMS (including U.S. Northern Command), the Missile Defense Agency and joint service components. JFCC IMD accomplishes these tasks through the dedication and hard work of approximately 120 people, including a full time staff and a 24/7 Operations Center.

JFCC IMD originated in the Implemented Directive issued by the Commander, USSTRATCOM, in January 2005. Since its inception, JFCC IMD has played an integral role in supporting USSTRATCOM and the Department of Defense during events such as Operation BURNT FROST, which leveraged missile defense technology to neutralize a decaying satellite in Space before it could reenter the atmosphere and become a hazard, as well as the North Korean missile launches in 2006 and 2009.

While the North Korean launch was ultimately unsuccessful, for JFCC IMD it was a great opportunity to get real-world mission experience. LTC Tracy Patton was in the JFCC IMD operations center during the missile launch. “Our personnel and systems performed very well. The ballistic missile defense system is complex and we are constantly training and testing. It requires a significant amount of cross-COCOM coordination and participation. We learned a tremendous amount throughout the course of this event. It was exciting to see everything come together.”

## BIO

U.S. Navy Cmdr. Chris Walker is the director of the JFCC IMD Current Operations Section where he is responsible for leading support to crisis action and missile defense planning.