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Staying on Our Game

The summer 2010 edition of the Army Space Journal has an outstanding lineup of articles that address the theme of, “Army Space – Sharpening Our Edge.” Analogies point to the need to remain sharp – stay on our game. Sharpening an edge connotes a single focus whether its sharpening scalpels or sharpening axes, depending on the amount of precision needed. As the articles in this issue indicate, we need to consider multi-edged tools and agile, multi-faceted thinking.

An excellent article in this edition that discusses the importance of relational training is by COL Gregory Bowen, Commander, 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD). He states, “I believe it is an operational imperative that we institutionalize space training into the Ballistic Missile Defense System training curriculum. From my perspective as a brigade commander, I want my missile defense crews to understand the operational implications of space on the Ballistic Missile Defense System.”

That is an excellent statement and one that calls to mind the White Paper by GEN Michael Moseley, the former Chief of Staff of the Air Force. In the 2007 paper, GEN Moseley states that throughout history militaries that failed were a result of a “failure to anticipate, a failure to learn, and [a] failure to adapt.”

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COL Gregory Bowen

Commander, 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD)

I believe we must anticipate, learn, and adapt to the rapidly changing environment which include the domains of space and cyberspace. We can no longer think in terms of sharpening a single edge; we must consider multi-edged instruments in the Warfighters tool box. This means that Army leaders need to understand that space and cyberspace are inextricably linked and we must understand how one enables the other, where the weak points exist, and what to do if one fails. And, as COL Bowen elucidated, we must determine how space and cyberspace enable our individual specialties.

Next, is a treatise on Space Power written by Michael Howard, USASMDC/ARSTRAT public affairs officer in Colorado Springs, Colo. In his Army War College paper, Mr. Howard postulates some interesting ideas about BG Billy Mitchell's theories on air power as it relates to space power and why there isn't a need right now for a separate space branch. The paper is well-written with plenty of supporting notes.

The commander of 1st Space Battalion provides an article and an OP-ED for careful consideration. LTC J. Dave Price, commander of 1st Space Battalion, puts forth ideas for possible mission and structure changes for 1st Space Battalion. LTC Price's article suggests creating a second space battalion to separate out the missions of Space Force Enhancement operations and Space Control and Special missions between the two battalions. Given the emerging importance of space-based assets, LTC Price's ideas are worth reading and discussing.

Returning to COL Bowen's article, he explains how Space plays a key role in missile defense. In fact, Space plays a role in enabling many units to continuously assess the situation, develop the situation, and win on the battlefield. Space provides the enablers while cyberspace provides the network that links the assets to the Warfighters.

An article that truly is about combining space and cyberspace is submitted by USASMDC Future Warfare Center's Battle

Lab. The article by, Mike Florio, David Hotop, Steven Groves, Kirk Davis and Rich Farrell, provides information about a Joint Capability Technology Demonstration for IRIS (Internet Protocol Routing in Space). The technology demonstration seeks to find "innovative space communication capabilities that could close the digital divide."

I am very interested in the outcome of the IRIS demonstration. Our current deployment schemes are much different than they were during the Cold War. Compared to cold war deployment schemes of some 100 square miles assigned to a brigade for responsibility, today's Brigade Combat Teams operate within a sector about the size of New Jersey. Operating in such large swaths of terrain requires a net centric capability that provides access to information and persistent communications. An internet router in space might be the answer. I look forward to future articles detailing the progress of the analysis.

Lastly, CSM Ralph Borja's article addresses gaining and maintaining a high standard. As he states, "we must train to an extremely high standard, and once we've achieved it we must exercise constantly in order to maintain proficiency – to reach the point where we can't get it wrong"

This is CSM Borja's last article as the command sergeant major of USASMDC/ARSTRAT as he gets ready to retire. His tour of duty here is emblematic of his 30 years of service. It has been marked with a singularly outstanding devotion to duty, a love for Soldiers, and an unflinching allegiance to country. CSM Borja will be dearly missed as we wish him and his family fair winds in their retirement.

As mentioned earlier, there are many excellent articles worth reading in this issue of the Army Space Journal. I appreciate the superb input of articles that help generate new ideas and pointed discussions in order to help our profession grow. I suspect there will be plenty of topics to discuss at the Army Space Cadre symposium in August.

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