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PARADIGM SHIFTS

1st Space Battalion and Space Mentorship

We all have a responsibility to develop junior officers, non-commissioned officers and Soldiers, and grow Army space and the space community in general. We can do this in our daily jobs, by reaching out through multiple media applications or even by participating in the Army Space Professionals Association. We must do the hard work today to reap the benefits 10-20 years from now. I challenge everyone in Army space to jump in and start making a difference – today. In several articles within this edition, the battalion will initiate discussion on a wide variety of space topics, but there are six areas in particular I would like to generate some thought on about our Space community in this article.

Training Base for All New FA40s

We believe it is the intent of the FA40 assignments division (and thus Army Space) to bring all newly assigned FA40 into the 1st Space Battalion in their first assignment. This will basically require the battalion to operate as training base for all new FA40 in their formative years. We are supportive of this initiative in the Brigade and believe now it is even more important to get as many officers as possible assigned to and working in both the Space Control and Space Force Enhancement fields. In Space Force Enhancement, we consider the Joint Tactical Ground Station and missile warning options to be just as valuable as Army Space Support Teams team experience. Not only would we plan on providing all new officers some experience in more than one mission area, but we intend in developing a natural progression line for officers from the battalion to the brigade to periodically, G3, Future Warfare Center, Directorate of Combat Development and National Security Space Institute positions. With that stated, the 1st Space Battalion remains a deploying force (force provider), and most officers will have to take at least one deployment in their time here. Allowing officers to develop in two mission areas also increases their chances of deploying twice during their time here. In order to meet all of these “experience” goals thus far discussed – we believe it is

necessary to assign all new FA40 to the 1st Space Battalion for four years. The end-state is that all of our officers are prepared to move on easily to Space Support Element positions and other jobs in Army, Joint, interagency or interservice positions.

Duration of Command for Space Battalion

The length of time for most active component battalion commanders is three years. While we don’t advocate for changing the length of command to three years, we do advocate for the three year experience. How do you do this? In the Navy and in other services, they do that by identifying the next commander as the executive officer of the ship or of an aviation squadron and then placing that officer in command following the executive officer experience. In the battalion you could increase the number of experienced battalion commanders who would be competitive for 0-6 key positions. Identify the executive officer for an 18 month tour and have these officers take command of the battalion(s) for 18 months, thus giving them the three years experience. It would also make for developing the executive officer position as key in the space community for growth and allow for smoother transitions between battalion commanders.

Task-Organizing for Future Space Battalions

In a future Army Space Journal article, I will lay out the advantages of developing a provisional 2nd Space Battalion for Space Control and the interim task organization that will set us (in the Army space community) for that possibility. Ultimately, we envision mission requirements that will force us into splitting the 1st Space Battalion along Space Force Enhancement and Space Control lines. That article will be designed to “think through” an interim organization that would allow for a Directorate of Combat Development study or possible out of cycle update to the Modified Table of Organization and Equipment. Regardless of the outcome of a study; the battalion continues to grow and at least two more company headquarters are required today to ensure success of our valued missions.

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We are on our near fiftieth deployment of a Space team downrange in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and we have developed a scientific approach in our “life cycle management” of this organization.

Lastly, we take a look at developing operational detachments out of our Army Space Support and Commercial Imagery teams that can be task organized and trained to do any Space Force Enhancement mission.

Army Force Generation

Also in the next Army Space Journal, the 1st Space Battalion will have an article that lays out how we conduct force generation for our space capabilities. We are on or near our fiftieth deployment of a Space team downrange in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and we have developed a scientific approach in our “life cycle management” of this organization down to the individual and team level. This article gets about the business of a production line in Space forces that provides trained and ready 365/24/7 teams in our model. It also describes how we task organize in a multi-component battalion and environment to make this happen.

Battalion Standardization

Recently, the 1st Space Battalion went through a fundamental shift in its approach to training and evaluation. As recently as June 2009, there was no full time training and certification shop at the battalion level for Space Control or Space Force Enhancement. Back in 2005, the battalion improved its oversight for missile warning (JTAGS) by building a training and evaluation team at the battalion level but only recently have we done the same for the rest of the mission areas. This now places training oversight and certification of detachments squarely on the shoulders of the battalion team and this is where certification needs to reside. We have recently rewritten, updated and improved all of our Tactics Techniques and Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures in Space control and will continue to drill down on our Space Force Enhancement and subsequent Missile Warning mission areas. The result of this work has specifically been embodied by the Brigade and the G-staff newly implemented Space Forces—Standards and Evaluation Section. This team effort is overall concerned about qualification, certification, validation, endorsement and training of our Space forces.

The Space Council of Colonels

This is a call for the leadership of the FA40 community to begin mentoring the next generation of the “Council of Colonels.” We spend a considerable amount of time talking

about mentoring the junior field grade and company grade officers but it is time we do the same at the 0-5 level.

The Council regularly meets (in most branches) to discuss highlighted topics, major muscle moves, phase lines and the way ahead for their community. However, this direction – derived and given – during these councils is often executed by the next generation of officers. The Council goes about the business of keeping the branch/proponent on track for proper growth and long term health of the organization. The Council should consider including some of the next generation of leaders in the organization in observation roles.

The Council is often made up of the senior space members by position (not individual) from USASMDC/ARSTRAT, FWC DCD, the brigade, G3/5/7, JFCC Space J3, National Security Space Office, Army Space Support Element Chiefs and Liaisons, as well as other significant stakeholders – the proponent for Space and our branch manager, to name a few. Most of these directorates have key mid to senior level 0-5s that could be involved in or understand major muscle moves made in the Council. Each director/lead for their area of influence should include at least one 0-5 to the discussion. Example, the U.S. Army Europe Chief (0-6) could invite a U.S. Africa Command, U.S. European Command or U.S. Army Europe Space Support Officer (0-5) to the table, same as the brigade commander (battalion commander or brigade S3 or both), G3/5/7 (DC area 0-5 staff officer) along with each and every influencer.

The reason is that most of these ideas and decisions will be executed or planned by the “future” of Space officers and not necessarily those officers who make or shape the decisions. We should continue to relook at how we run and manage “the Army Space organization.” Now is the time to develop the next generation of senior officers; not later.

This article is solely the opinion of the writer and is designed to spark discussion in these important areas of space organization and mentorship. The writer can be reached at john.price1@us.army.mil to further the discussion or idea.

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