

Space

Leadership in the 21st century



From
the Top

By Brig. Gen. Richard E. Webber
Commander, 21st Space Wing

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — When Space Command activated in 1982, its first commander, Gen. James Hartinger, said it was “a crucial milestone in the evolution of military space operations.” Since then, Space Command has lived up to its mission statement to “Defend the United States through control and exploitation of air and space.” We’ve evolved from a command that only developed, launched, and controlled satellites to a command that integrates space combat power into how we organize and fight our nation’s conflicts.

We have shaped the future and now it’s time to move on to “Command the Future”—the vision of the current commander, Gen. Lance Lord.

During Operation Enduring Freedom, I had the opportunity to bring “space power to the fight” as the first senior space officer assigned to a combatant Coalition Forces Air Component Commander, and served as the Assistant Combined Air Operations Center Director for Space and Information Operations within the area of responsibility.

We led the first employment of deployable space systems in direct support of combat operations. Operations includ-

ed the first employment of the Global Positioning System Enhanced Theater Support capability. This was the first time we folded the full spectrum of space capabilities into the Master Air Attack Planning process, ensuring integrated air and space combat power was directed on-target and on-time.

We used the Space Based Infrared Systems to provide immediate battle damage assessments and support to combat search and rescue operations. The warfighting capabilities provided by our space forces are clearly key military asymmetric advantages not seen before OEF, and clearly an advantage we can no longer fight without.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was the first real “space war” with truly integrated space throughout the battlespace. We used capabilities from space to ensure we maintained both air and space superiority. The contributions provided were many—high bandwidth, protected, robust communications, missile launch warning, real-time battle damage assessment support, and more than 700 deployed space professionals contributing to the fight.

These advantages are not just the result of our space systems and their capabilities alone. Our leaders are a large part of the equation. The vision of establishing a senior space

Seven thrusts to success

Space Command’s strategy, commanding the future, is the flight plan for transformation to maintain control of the ultimate high ground of space. Our strategic thrust areas capture the essence of space transformation.

“Command the Future”

This concept provides the overarching vision and guidance for efforts in the other thrust areas.

1

Enterprise

This thrust leads the development of a new generation of capabilities, to include responsive/assured space access, integrated ISR, prompt global strike and space superiority.

2

Partner

A key product of this area is to enhance our capability to command and control space forces by creating and sharing a joint battlespace awareness capability.

3

Unleash human talent

This thrust develops space professionals and guides career paths to create a space cadre of all the disciplines needed to maintain space dominance.

4

officer continued to evolve after our Afghanistan OEF experience with the placement of a dedicated senior space officer, and for the first time the Combined Forces Air Component Commander was designated as the Space Coordinating Authority to integrate all joint space capabilities on behalf of the combatant commander.

We've matured the contributions of space to a level that is revolutionary in the realm of combined and joint operations. This new construct wasn't envisioned 50 years ago. Today we have space operators working alongside operators at combatant commands around the world as well as at their air, land and sea components. In the future, the senior space officer in the air component will be known as the Director of Space Forces, as approved at CORONA South in February.

The DIRSPACEFOR construct is similar to the senior space officer concept—a senior advisor to the Commander Air Force Forces and Combined/Joint Forces Air Component Commander during conflict. The DIRSPACEFOR has many responsibilities including assisting in the prioritization of space capabilities, coordinating reachback, and most importantly, executing day-to-day authority to coordinate joint theater space operations. The DIRSPACEFOR is a leader in space capabilities and the contributions that Space brings to the fight.

The DIRSPACEFOR must, as its predecessor the senior space officer did, become an integrated partner in how we command, control and execute air and space power as part of a joint team. We must integrate air, land, sea and space capabilities to provide the greatest combat advantage and deliver the most potent wartime effects. Only within the last 10 years, after Operation Desert Storm, did the concept of integrating space capabilities begin to be realized across not only the Air Force, but all services, and influence how we all organize, train, equip and fight our nation's conflicts.

Just as space transformed our society (GPS, for example,

syncs our power grids, cell phones, and ATM transactions), it has transformed our military with the doctrine-changing DIRSPACEFOR construct. Air Force Space Command, under the leadership of General Lord, is taking the team farther ahead in this transformation, and every leader in the command has a vital role in this effort.

His intent is to transform the command and provide full spectrum space combat capabilities to ensure the United States remains the preeminent space force on earth.

Space superiority is our mandate and requires the same sense of urgency that we placed on gaining and maintaining air, land and sea superiority.

This year we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Air Force Space and Missiles. Satellite communications is an important part of this celebration, but by far, it is not the only capability Space brings to the fight.

Through focused, trusted and experienced leadership, we've matured Space to become an integrated and essential partner in wartime and peacetime. The biggest challenges to our space forces are not behind us, but lie ahead.

Continued leadership, focused on commanding the future and integrating our capabilities throughout the joint fight will ensure we maintain the asymmetric advantage that has allowed us to be the dominant and winning force. I cannot imagine a more exciting time to be in the Space business.



Satellite launch

SPACECOM flight plan

Warfighters

This thrust focuses our ability to operate from, in and through space with combat ready forces. The DIRSPACEFOR construct is leading the way.

5

Wizards

This thrust charters professionals to think outside the box and encourages space specialists to develop new power theories and concepts.

6

Technology to warfighting

This thrust recognizes today's capabilities are based on yesterday's technology, and we must focus this technology on warfighting capabilities.

7