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ULCHI FOCUS LENS

Maintaining balance across a joint spectrum



By MAJ Joseph Carroll

August 2006 once again witnessed a large deployment of 1st Space Brigade forces in support of Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL) on the Korean Peninsula. Although the annual occurrence of this exercise may prompt the notion of a static construct — the 1st Space Brigade and U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command continuously analyze and modify strategies to better support the Korean theater — specifically the Ground Component Command. Deploying to the peninsula a mere month after the North Korean launch of a Taepo Dong II missile, it was more critical than ever to learn from past experiences and ensure that “lessons learned” were captured, analyzed and applied in near real time to improve future training and warfighting. This year’s deployment consisted of 40 Space Soldiers from off peninsula, in addition to the 18 Soldiers/Sailors from the Joint Tactical Ground Station-Pacific Detachment, configured to maximize Space support, Space related targeting and Space effects in support of the Ground Component Command.

Maintaining Balance

As the demand for Space support increases across the joint and interagency warfighting community, the task of appropriately allocating Space forces in support of specific missions and units becomes complex. The 1st Space Brigade, a Modified Table of Organization and Equipment organization as of Oct. 16, 2005, starts this process with a clear focus on directed missions. The brigade’s primary focus is to provide trained and ready Space forces in support of deployed combat forces while simultaneously conducting 24/7 missions, providing missile warning and communications capabilities, in support of combatant commanders and U.S. Strategic Command. The preparation,

deployment and sustainment of Space forces for combat continues to drive the brigade’s training focus — with continued support to missions across the Central Command Area of Responsibility. The second priority is to meet the brigade’s responsibilities as outlined in approved Theater War Plans. This is normally manifest in participation in major theater exercises, such as Ulchi Focus Lens, that call for the deployment and employment of Army Space forces in support of specific objectives. Participation in the exercise meets the unit’s responsibilities to contribute in accordance with an existing plan while also providing a unique venue to maximize collective training objectives. This segues well into the brigade’s third priority — to plan, train and execute battle-focused training that supports Mission Essential Task List proficiency.

Evolving Theater Space Support Construct

Beyond the 1st Space Brigade’s training strategy, the unit frequently seizes the opportunity to contribute the expertise of its Soldiers and officers to the SMDC/ARSTRAT Battle Lab and Future Warfare Center to enable the development of doctrine and future capabilities that meet the requirements of supported units. One critical document that the brigade helped shape is the concept paper: Army Theater Space Support in Joint Operations — Today.

Signed on July 26, 2006, this document captured the lessons learned from multiple exercises and operations, and was delivered by the Future Warfare Center in time to positively affect the employment of brigade forces during UFL 06. The brigade referenced this document extensively to inform a strategy of providing a modular, rapidly deployable Space Task Force, under the command of the 1st Space Brigade commander, to support both the specific

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and broad Space needs of the Ground Component Command commander in the United Nations Command/Combined Force Command Korea.

Space Coordinating Detachment

Key to supporting the Ground Component Command commander was the construct of the Space Coordinating Detachment. Split into two sections, the detachment ensured that the Ground Component Command's Space requirements and effects nominations were clearly understood and serviced at the Air Component Command — where that commander serves as the Theater Space Authority and the Space Coordinating Officer serves as the primary representative of the Space Authority. (Central Command refers to this position as the Director of Space Forces). The necessity of splitting the Space Coordinating Detachment into two sections became readily apparent for a number of reasons. First, the detachment at the Ground Component Command is inherently necessary in order to adequately support command requirements and establish the center of gravity for theater Space support to the command. The planners from this detachment integrated in the C35 Fires and Effects Coordination Cell in order to support Space-related targeting and effects and be positioned to communicate these to the detachment at the Air Component Command.

The Space Coordinating Detachment at the Air Component Command integrated through the Battlefield Coordination Detachment, which is doctrinally located at the Air Component and whose commander speaks on behalf of the Ground Component Command commander. The Air Component Command detachment enabled direct access to the Space Coordinating Officer, a number of Space subject matter experts located throughout the command headquarters, and most importantly the combined effects board that finalizes and prioritizes the targets and effects for incorporation into the Integrated Tasking Order. The efforts of both the Air and Ground Component Command Space Coordinating Detachments, utilizing the existing theater processes by

which the Fires and Effects Coordination Cell forwards target and effect nominations to the Battlefield Coordination Detachment, provided a solid doctrinal foundation for supporting ground component commander requirements.

Integrations with Joint Space Forces

Integral to all current and future operations is the ability to integrate with other service and inter-agency partners — and the Korean theater is no exception. Brigade Space forces participated in the twice daily Joint Functional Component Command-Space/Joint Space Operations Center Video Teleconferences, working these into their battle rhythms and leveraging these forums to highlight Ground Component Command requirements. Additionally, Space Coordinating Detachment planners fostered professional relationships with Air Force Space augmentees, permanent party members, and representatives from the National Interagency Liaison Team. The benefits of collaborating in a coalition, joint, interagency environment were mutually beneficial to all involved and greatly contributed to a unity of effort across the theater.

Conclusion

Just as the geopolitical climate of East Asia and the Korean peninsula are constantly in a state of change and evolution — so is the construct for the employment of U.S. military forces in the region. The challenge of providing trained and ready Space forces at the correct echelon and location to positively enable ground forces remains a moving target that demands an adaptable, flexible and deployable Space force capability. As the battlefield environment changes, our Space forces must adapt quickly and decisively in order to remain relevant and ready to support land forces.

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