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Life in the joint side of Space

By MAJ J. Dave Price

On July 19, the commander of U.S. Strategic Command signed the implementation directive giving the commander of the Joint Functional Component Command-Space (JFCC-Space) the authority and responsibility to command and control almost all Department of Defense Space assets worldwide. This is the first time that almost all of Space was centrally and centrally controlled by one command and commander.

For the past couple of years, the 14th Air Force Space and Air Operations Center has transformed into a Joint Space Operations Center. For the past year, the Joint Space Operations Center has been the operations center for the commander, Joint Space Operations (JSO). This all changed after the implementation directive as the commander, JFCC-Space assumed command and control of a majority of all the Space current operational elements from Naval Space Operations Center, Army Forces Strategic Command and Air Force Space Command. The commander JFCC-Space is the Global Space Coordinating Authority and provides Space mission expertise to plan support, integrate, assess and synchronize efforts for U.S. Strategic Command and other combatant commanders' operational level requirements. These requirements include taking lead for Space control, Space situational awareness, Space offensive and defensive operations, Space force enhancements such as Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance; ITW/AA; environmental monitoring; Satellite Communication; Positioning, Navigation and Timing; and also in Space support (lift and

satellite operations) and Space force applications. JFCC-Space is also the day to day manager of missile warning capability and serves as the supporting commander to JFCC-Integrated Missile Defense and JFCC-Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance for management of the missile warning centers and data.

One of the major drawbacks to JFCC-Space is that a good slice of Space operations are not in Vandenberg, Calif. — but this is where the new joint headquarters is located. A lot of the joint Space staff and expertise resides at Offutt, Neb., and in Colorado Springs, Colo. It will be necessary to move many of these office structures, organizations and manpower to Vandenberg to complete the transformation of the command to a fully operational capability. The movement of the Space control center, the missile correlation center, J35 (U.S. Strategic Command Space staff), and unified Space vault to Vandenberg over the next three years will finalize the formation of a single command to provide command and control of Space organizations by one joint staff. While the commander, Joint Space Operations had a couple of liaison officers from separate and combined services, there were no joint billets assigned to them. Now U.S. Strategic Command has approved the movement and/or addition of up to 129 joint billets in Vandenberg. The first four joint Army officers were assigned in September 2006 with the rest to follow in the next three years. The majority of these billets will transition from Nebraska, Colorado and JFCC-Global Strike and Integration as folks change stations from their



current joint positions. These positions will be backfilled in California. Currently there are two allied officers assigned from the United Kingdom and Australia.

The command will be headquartered in Vandenberg and will consist of a J2, J3/7, J5/8, J4/6 and Joint Space Operations Center. The Center is a separate staff that is based on the Air Force Air Operations Center concept. However, although it has a Strategy, Plans and an Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance division, the real difference is in the Combat Operations Division. There have been many variations in the last couple of years, but there is a way ahead. The Combat Operations Division will consist of the command and control element (battle watch), Theater Integration Cell, Global Space Tracking and Surveillance Cell, Assured Access and Manned Flight, Global Information Services, Unified Space Vault Operations and Space Superiority.

The command and control element includes a Battle Watch Commander (identified as the Senior Space Duty Officer), a Crew Chief (and Information Manager), and Senior Intelligence Duty Officer in order to manage the common operating picture and provide a single integrated Space picture.

The Theater Integration Cell will be the focal point for all products, programs, and Space support requirements by theater.

The Global Space Tracking and Surveillance Cell provides radar sensor management, provides nuclear exoatmospheric detonation detection and missile warning oversight, and interoperability with the Missile Correlation Center and Global Positioning System Operations Center.

Assured Access provides monitoring and support of the Air

Force Space Control Network and all domestic launch activities and is supported by members of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Manned Flight Team. The Manned Flight Team supports the operations center by tracking and monitoring all manned flight activities.

Space superiority is conducted by the Space Control Center at Cheyenne Mountain (known as Joint Space Operations Center mountain) and is moving to Vandenberg (along with the Unified Space Vault) shortly to perform these duties as a part of Combat Operations Division. They are responsible for the Space Surveillance Network, tracking all things in Space, and predicting re-entries and deorbits of Space matter.

The Senior Intelligence Officer supports the Senior Space Duty Officer/Space Watch and Battle Watch by supervising and integrating the efforts of the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance team embedded with the Global Space Tracking and Surveillance Cell and the Space Superiority Cell.

U.S. Strategic Command has not divested its interest in Space but is executing these responsibilities through the commander JFCC-Space as the one stop shop for operations and staffing to provide the best current Space support to Department of Defense and the National Command Authority. Research, development and acquisition still remains in the hands of the multiple service battle labs and acquisition organizations.

MAJ J. Dave Price is one of the first of many officers to be assigned to Joint Functional Component Command-Space/U.S. Strategic Command and is currently serving as the first Joint Senior Space Duty Officer in the Joint Space Operations Center. He can be reached for comment at John.Price1@us.army.mil or DSN 276-9994.