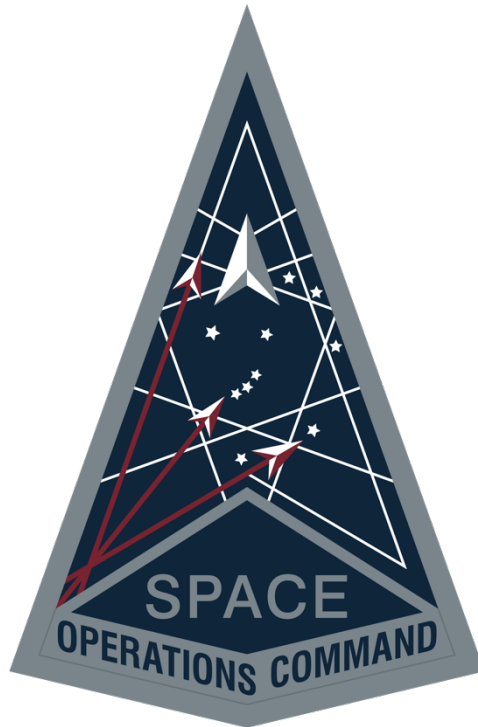


SPACE OPERATIONS COMMAND



MISSION

LINEAGE

Space Command established and activated, 1 Sep 1982

Redesignated Air Force Space Command, 15 Nov 1985

United States Space Force (serving in transitional capacity as Hq USSF), 20 Dec 2019

Space Operations Command, 21 Oct 2020

Status changed from unit of the United States Air Force to unit of the United States Space Force, 21 Oct 2020.

STATIONS

United States Air Force, 1 Sep 1982

ASSIGNMENTS

United States Space Force, 21 Oct 2020

COMMANDERS

Gen James V. Hartinger, 1 Sep 1982

Gen Robert T. Herres, 30 Jul 1984

Maj Gen Maurice C. Padden, 1 Oct 1986

Lt Gen Donald J. Kutyna, 29 Oct 1987

Lt Gen Thomas S. Moorman Jr., 29 Mar 1990

Gen Donald J. Kutyna, 23 Mar 1992

Gen Charles A. Horner, 30 Jun 1992
Gen Joseph W. Ashy, 13 Sep 1994
Gen Howell M. Estes III, 26 Aug 1996
Gen Richard B. Myers, 14 Aug 1998
Gen Ralph E. Eberhart, 22 Feb 2000
Gen Lance W. Lord, 19 Apr 2002
Lt Gen Frank G. Klotz (acting), 1 Apr 2006
Gen Kevin P. Chilton, 26 Jun 2006
Lt Gen Michael A. Hamel (Acting), 3 Oct 2007
Gen C. Robert Kehler, 12 Oct 2007
Gen William L. Shelton, 5 Jan 2011
Gen John E. Hyten, 15 Aug 2014
Gen John W. Raymond, 25 Oct 2016
Lt Gen Stephen N. Whiting, 21 Oct 2020

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Global War on Terrorism – Service (GWOT-S).

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards

1 Jun 1985-31 May 1987

1 Jun 1987-31 May 1989

1 Jun 1994-31 May 1996

1 Nov 1996-31 Oct 1998

1 Nov 1998-31 Oct 2000

1 Nov 2000-31 Oct 2002

1 Mar 2004-1 Mar 2006

1 Jan 2013-31 Dec 2013

EMBLEM



On a shield Azure, a globe with axis palewise Light Blue, rimmed Argent, gridlined Sable, enveloped by two eclipses saltirewise Argent, surmount in pale by a deltoid of the last garnished Sable between two mullets of four points Or delineated Sable, all within a pattern of seven mullets of five points, three in chief, three in base and one in sinister flank Argent and in

dexter flank a small globe of the last, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The centrally dominant globe represents the earth as viewed from space, the earth being both the origin and control point for all space satellites. The lines of latitude and longitude emphasize the global nature of Air Force space operations. The emblem is provided its distinctive appearance by two symmetric ellipses representing the orbital paths traced by satellites in earth orbit; the satellites themselves being symbolically depicted as four point stars. The 30 degree orbital inclination and symmetrically opposed placement of the satellites signify the worldwide coverage provided by Air Force satellites in accomplishing the surveillance and communications missions. The slight tapering of the orbital ellipses represents the characteristic eastward motion. The centrally superimposed deltoid symbolizes both the Air Force upward thrust into space and the launch vehicles needed to place all satellites in orbit. The distinctive dark blue background shading, small globe, and stars symbolize the space environment. (Approved, 28 Jul 1982).

Space Force emblem approved on 14 Jun 2022.

MOTTO

Guardians of the High Frontier

The Space Command motto was the product of a contest which was opened to the local Air Force community in the Colorado Springs area. The actual motto was coined from the submissions of three individuals representing Space Command and the USAF Academy. The winning motto was announced 17 Feb 1983.

OPERATIONS

By 1980 the Air Force had split its air defense and space-based missile warning and attack assessment functions, and disestablished Aerospace Defense Command (ADCOM) as a major Air Force command. Tactical Air Command had taken over resource management of Air Force air defense aircraft, while operational control of these aircraft rested with North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) (of which ADCOM composed the American portion). The space systems resource management had been absorbed into the Strategic Air Command, with their operational control resting with ADCOM. Many of these space systems were managed in conjunction with Air Force Systems Command, based on their determination that these systems were unique research and development systems. The fragmentation in control of its space system assets prompted the Air Force to look towards the formation of an Air Force space command to control and operate these systems.

Effective 1 Sep 1982, the Air Force formed Space Command (SPACECOM) to manage its space systems, while ADCOM remained a JCS-specified command, though many positions were dual and triple-hatted as SPACECOM, ADCOM, and NORAD. The incumbent commander of ADCOM and NORAD headed SPACECOM, while the commander of AFSC's Space Division took on the additional role of vice commander of SPACECOM. According to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Lew Allen, the new command's function was to "provide a focus initially for operational planning,

coordination and consolidation of activities relating to space mission areas." This organizational change set the stage for formation of a unified space command. Under the reorganization attending the command's formation, some systems would remain temporarily under AFSC direction until construction of new control facilities allowed SPACECOM to take over.

Shortly after the Space Command was established on 1 Sep 1982, Headquarters USAF decided that the new command would be assigned the Missile Warning and Space Surveillance Systems that SAC acquired from the Air Defense Command in 1979. Accordingly, approximately 3600 personnel, 31 units, and four Air Force installations were transferred from SAC to the Space Command on 1 Apr and 1 May 1983.

Air Force Space Command assumed command and control over the intercontinental ballistic missiles formerly assigned to the Air Combat Command on 1 Jul 1993. The Air Force Space Command serves as the USAF component of the United States Space Command and also of the United States Strategic Command.

On 19 Apr 2002, AFSPC became a separate four-star Air Force command with the designation of the AFSPC commander as a four-star position distinct from the commanders of US Space Command and NORAD.

The primary purpose of Air Force Space Command is to enhance US military operations by ensuring access to and use of space. Space operations include tactical warning and attack assessment, space surveillance, spacelift, satellite control, counterspace, and direct support to combat forces.

Space surveillance operations support the counterspace, spacelift, and satellite control missions by detecting, identifying, tracking, and collecting technical data for intelligence purposes on manmade space objects. Space surveillance data also supports terrestrial operations by providing over flight warning of foreign and hostile space vehicles. Active and passive ground-based radar and electro-optical sensors make up the Space Surveillance Network.

Spacelift (launch and range) operations ensure the US has continued access to space. The Air Force provides the spacelift and launch recovery infrastructure required to support Department of Defense (DoD), national, civil, and commercial satellite systems. The Air Force spacelift infrastructure also supports launch tests of strategic and tactical ballistic missiles. Air Force spacelift operations are conducted at Eastern and Western Ranges and are controlled by AFSPC organizations at Patrick AFB, Florida and Vandenberg AFB, California.

Satellite control operations oversee the health and well-being of orbiting satellites and their mission payloads. Space Operations Squadrons (SOPS) use the global Air Force Satellite Control Network (AFSCN) to downlink vital statistics and mission data from satellites. The SOPS also use the AFSCN to send tasking commands to mission payloads, initiate relocation maneuvers, and perform station keeping maintenance functions. Satellite control operations ensure satellite mission payloads can perform their combat support functions for theater forces.

Counterspace operations prevent an enemy from gaining an advantage through the use of their space systems and protect our ability to conduct effective space, air, ground, and naval

operations. Counterspace operations are conducted in concert with the theater Commander in Chief's (CINC) campaign plans and employs terrestrial and space-based systems to gain control of space. Counterspace operations are categorized as either offensive or defensive. Offensive counterspace operations are lethal and non-lethal actions taken by terrestrial and space-based forces to neutralize an enemy's ability to exploit space capabilities. At present, offensive counterspace capabilities are limited to attacks against the ground and link segments of a space system. Defensive counterspace operations reduce the vulnerability and increase the survivability of all segments of US space systems.

Space-based assets provide direct support to combat forces worldwide by providing tactical warning/attack assessment, global command, control, and communications, early warning of tactical and strategic ballistic missile launches, navigation support, environmental data, and data for intelligence purposes. Integration of space-derived data into theater command and control systems, mission planning systems, and weapon delivery systems, is a continuing process. The Space Warfare Center and its Air Force Tactical Exploitation of National Capabilities program spearhead Air Force initiatives to increase the effectiveness of space-based combat support operations.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 31 Dec 2023

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.