

# THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

## The Time is Now

The time has come to create a separate armed service for space. The urgent nature of the threat to our commercial, civil, and military space enterprise means that it is time to create a service that organizes, trains, and equips a military service to integrate space power. The Space Force's mission will be **to protect the US, its allies, and its interests from attack in, attack from, and attack through space.**

Why now? A United States Space Force is needed now to create a military space doctrine and a professional cadre of space personnel for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Here's the key point: under the current approach to military space, the Department of Defense has failed to deliver the doctrine and personnel cadre commensurate with the threat. Military space capability is Balkanized across the Air Force, Army, Navy, NASA, and the NRO. The Air Force, as the principal military space service, has failed to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century space warfighting doctrine and has neglected the development of a first-class corps of career space officers. The Air Force officer corps remains dominated by career fighter pilots who do not give appropriate priority to the development of space doctrine, systems, and career personnel. It has had decades to prove it is up to this task and it has failed. Given the rapid development of adversary space capacity, the United States cannot afford to wait additional decades for the Air Force to get serious about space.

Many argue that it is premature to contemplate a unified Space Force, or that a new Unified Space Command can serve the same purpose. While I agree that a joint Space Command is needed, it isn't enough. Unified commands do not write doctrine. That is a service responsibility and in the absence of a separate Space Force, military space doctrine has languished and is failing to drive the debate about the future role of the United States in space. By comparison, the nascent US Army Air Corps was a prime mover of doctrine, tactics, and procedures during the interwar period of the 1920s and 1930s. It forced the debate about the future of the United States as a global air power. No such debate has arisen from the current DoD configuration for space and it won't come from a Unified Space Command. It will only come with the establishment of a separate service that has clear authority for establishing a war fighting doctrine and a war fighting ethos.

Unified commands also have limited acquisition authority, if they have any at all. Integrating development and acquisition authorities is one of the prime arguments in favor of a separate Space Force. We must bring together the operational and technical capabilities of the military services, the NRO, and NASA. For example,

hypersonics is a crucial 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology area and much of the leading work is taking place in NASA. That work should be moved a new Space Development Agency (SDA). The Air Force Space and Missile Development Center should fall under the SDA. All of the NRO should be moved to the Space Force.

The new force must have unity of command and clear up confusion over who is responsible for space – in both the uniformed and civilian chains of command. The new service’s civilian and uniformed leaders must be equipped with impeccable space and leadership credentials and with political savvy and intellectual depth and flexibility. Further, it is essential that the new leadership team has consistent top cover from the White House, SECDEF, and OMB.

Given the certainty that threats to the global space “commons” will continue to worsen, it is time to define a space power doctrine and strategy that will enable the development of US military capability in space beyond the support services it furnishes today. Establishing a Space Force as a separate service will catalyze the Department of Defense to take decisive action. Anything short of the establishment of a separate service risks a continuation of an unacceptable status quo that will fail to address the severity of the threat faced by the US and its allies.

Since World War Two, the United States and its partners in NATO and elsewhere have secured a general, global peace. Despite that success we are falling behind in securing space. There now exists a unique opportunity to restructure the national space enterprise to enable the United States to begin to improve security in space. There is a unique opportunity to define space power doctrine and strategy designed to prevent conflict and to employ military power in space across the spectrum of conflict should deterrence fail.

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