

[Home](#) [News](#) [Photos](#) [Art](#) [Library](#) [Units](#) [Questions](#) [Join](#) [Heritage](#)
Library > Fact Sheets > [Air Force Space Command](#)

Search
search fact sheets
Advanced Search

AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

Air Force Space Command, created Sept. 1, 1982, is a major command headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. AFSPC defends North America through its space and intercontinental ballistic missile operations - vital force elements in projecting global reach and global power.



AFSPC Mission

To deliver space and missile capabilities to America and its warfighting commands

Vision

America's space leaders ... delivering responsive, assured, decisive space power

[Download](#)

[Fact Sheet Tools](#)

 [Printable Fact Sheet](#)

People

Approximately 39,000 people, including 25,000 active-duty military and civilians, and 13,700 contractor employees, combine to perform the AFSPC missions.

Organization

AFSPC has two numbered air forces and two centers. Fourteenth Air Force is located at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. Fourteenth Air Force manages the generation and employment of space forces to support U.S. Strategic Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command operational plans and missions. Twentieth Air Force is located at F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo. Twentieth Air Force operates and maintains the nation's intercontinental ballistic missile weapon systems in support of USSTRATCOM war plans.

The Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles AFB, Calif., designs and acquires all Air Force and most Department of Defense space systems. It oversees launches, completes on-orbit checkouts and then turns systems over to user agencies. It supports the Program Executive Office for Space on the Global Positioning, Defense Satellite Communications and MILSTAR systems. SMC also supports the Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle, Defense Meteorological Satellite and Defense Support programs, and the Space Based Infrared System. In addition, it supports development and acquisition of land-based ICBMs for the Air Force Program Executive Office for Strategic Systems.

SMC also manages the research, design, development, acquisition and sustainment of space launch, command and control, missile systems and satellite systems.

The Space Innovation and Development Center at Schriever AFB, Colo., is responsible for integrating space systems into the operational Air Force.

AFSPC bases include: Schriever, Peterson and Buckley, Colo.; Los Angeles and Vandenberg, Calif., Patrick, Fla.; F.E. Warren, Wyo.; Malmstrom, Mont.; and one wing is located at Minot, N.D., an Air Combat Command base. In addition, many geographically separated units span the globe.

Space Capabilities

Spacelift operations at the east and west coast launch bases provide services, facilities and range safety control for the conduct of DoD, NASA and commercial launches. Through the command and control of all DoD satellites, satellite operators provide force-multiplying effects -- continuous global coverage, low vulnerability and autonomous operations. Satellites provide essential in-theater secure communications, weather and navigational data for ground, air and fleet operations and threat warning. Ground-based radar and Defense Support Program satellites monitor ballistic missile launches around the world to guard against a surprise missile attack on North America. Space surveillance radars provide vital information on the location of satellites and space debris for the nation and the world. Maintaining space superiority is an emerging capability required to protect our space assets. With a readiness rate above 99 percent, America's ICBM team plays a critical role in maintaining world peace and ensuring the nation's safety and security.

Resources

AFSPC acquires, operates and supports the Global Positioning System, Defense Satellite Communications Systems, Defense Meteorological Satellite Program, Defense Support Program, the Wideband Global SATCOM satellite system and the Space-Based Infrared System Program. AFSPC currently operates the Delta II, Delta IV and Atlas V launch vehicles. The Atlas V and Delta IV launch vehicles comprise the Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program, which is the future of assured access to space. AFSPC's launch operations include the Eastern and Western ranges and range support for all launches, including the space shuttle on the Eastern Range. The command maintains and operates a worldwide network of satellite tracking stations, called the Air Force Satellite Control Network, to provide communications links to satellites.

Ground-based radars used primarily for ballistic missile warning include the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System, PAVE Phased Array Warning System and Perimeter Acquisition Radar Attack radars. The Maui Optical Tracking Identification Facility, Ground-based Electro-Optical Deep Space Surveillance System, Passive Space Surveillance System, phased-array and mechanical radars provide primary space surveillance coverage. New transformational space programs are continuously being researched and developed to enable AFSPC to stay on the leading-edge of technology.

The ICBM force consists of Minuteman III missiles that provide the critical component of America's on-alert strategic forces. As the nation's "silent sentinels," ICBMs, and the people who operate them, have remained on continuous, around-the-clock alert since 1959 - longer than any other U.S. strategic force. More than 450 ICBMs are currently on alert in reinforced concrete launch facilities beneath the Great Plains.

AFSPC is the Air Force's lead command for and largest operator of UH-1N Huey helicopters. AFSPC uses helicopters to support ICBM operations at F.E. Warren, Malmstrom, and Minot.

History

On Sept. 1, 1982, the Air Force established Air Force Space Command, with space operations as its primary mission. During the Cold War, space operations focused on

missile warning, space surveillance and command and control for national leadership. In 1991, Operation Desert Storm provided emphasis for the command's new focus on support to the warfighter. The Space Warfare Center, now named the Space Innovation and Development Center, was created to ensure space capabilities reach the people who need it. ICBM forces joined AFSPC in 1993. In 2001, upon the recommendation of the Space Commission, the Space and Missile Systems Center joined the command. It previously belonged to Air Force Materiel Command. Now, AFSPC is the only Air Force command to have its acquisition arm within the command. In 2002, also on a recommendation from the Space Commission, AFSPC was assigned its own four-star commander after previously sharing a commander with U.S. Space Command and NORAD.

(Current as of February 2008)

Point of Contact: [Air Force Space Command Public Affairs Office](#); 150 Vandenberg St., Suite 1105; Peterson AFB, Colo., 80914-4500; DSN 692-3731 or (719) 554-3731.

[Site Map](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Publications](#) | [Security and Privacy notice](#) | [External Link Disclaimer](#)