

CSO NOTICE TO GUARDIANS (C-NOTE #25)

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SUBJECT: FORCE PRESENTATION

FROM: CSO

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

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As the Chief of Space Operations, I am a statutory member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The JCS meets regularly in a Pentagon conference room called “The Tank” to examine and discuss matters of significant military importance. Many of these deliberations center around the operational employment of military forces around the globe. As a participant in these discussions, I’ve come to realize that the Space Force can, at times, struggle to effectively communicate our capabilities with the other Services and the combatant commands because we lack a formal and well understood framework for force presentation. Solidifying how the Space Force presents forces is an [important way](#) we are [optimizing for great power competition](#), so I wanted to share my thoughts on this important topic.

Every Service has a preferred approach to force presentation. For example, the Air Force has presented deployable air forces through the Air Expeditionary Task Force model for most of my career. The Army’s primary combat formation is the Brigade Combat Team. The Navy organizes combat forces into Battle Groups while the Marine Corps organizes around the Marine Air-Ground Task Force concept. Each is tailored to service-specific warfighting requirements. Prior to the Space Force, there was not a space-unique force presentation model. Over the last four years we have gradually developed our own that I believe is now ready for implementation.

As I’ve said many times before, *form must follow function*. Our force presentation must reflect that every mission we perform requires expertise in intelligence, cyberspace operations, space system operations, engineering, and sustainment. Therefore, our approach must integrate these skillsets into *combat formations* capable of operating as *distinct units of action*. Under the approach I presented last month at AFA, the Space Force will present two types of combat formations to the Joint Force: *combat squadrons* (i.e., employed-in-place activities) and *combat detachments* (i.e., deployable activities). These are the units of action that accomplish combatant commander missions. The cross-functional nature of these formations means it will typically take personnel from multiple mission squadrons to generate, present, and sustain one unit of action.

When these combat units of action are placed under the operational control of a [Space Force Service component](#) commander in support of a named operation, the resulting formation is a *Space Mission Task Force* (SMTF). Every SMTF is comprised of a commander (i.e., the *COMSPACEFOR*), an element that performs command and control on behalf of the commander, and combat formations that conduct military space operations. The SMTF elevates and normalizes space operations by ensuring that *the senior ranking Space Force commander in a joint force reports directly to the joint force commander and has all the combat capability and expertise to execute the mission*.

Today, we are in the early stages of implementing combat squadrons, combat detachments, and SMTFs. Now, it’s time to finish the work. In the near-term, we will resource, implement, exercise, and improve upon these ideas as we optimize for great power competition. There are still details to work out, and the Pentagon staff will be working closely with field organizations to resolve them. As always, I encourage you to debate and refine these ideas so that we get them right.

Semper Supra!