SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
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SUBJECT: Headquarters Air Force Space Management and Organization

In December 2009, I directed a review of Air Force Headquarters Management of Space Responsibilities. The objective of the review was to ensure that the Air Force, and in particular Air Force Headquarters, has the right structure and relationships in place for space management. The review, conducted between December 2009 and May 2010, included a review of existing information and over 70 interviews with key individuals across the Air Force, DoD and other government and international organizations.

With an overall goal of improving space support to the joint warfighting team, and other government and civil users, the objectives of this study were to:

1) Clarify and streamline the space functions assigned to the Under Secretary of the Air Force (USecAF).
2) Reaffirm space related roles, functions, and responsibilities across the Headquarters, Air Force (HAF).
3) Assess space-related changes to the roles and functions assigned to the DoD Executive Agent (EA) for Space.
4) Provide recommended organizational and process options that would improve the HAF's efficiency and effectiveness in support of the Air Force's space responsibilities.

This review is now complete and this memo reflects the review's findings and follow-on actions to be taken.

Findings

The study looked carefully at the impact of changes over the last decade to the assumptions that underlay our Air Force space management organization. The current Air Force space management structure was directed by the Secretary of Defense almost 10 years ago in response to findings from the Commission to Assess United States National Security Space Management and Organization (commonly referred to as the Space Commission). In that reorganization, the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) was designated as the Department of Defense (DoD) EA for Space with centralized responsibilities for Air Force and DoD space management. The SecAF subsequently delegated the DoD EA responsibilities to the USecAF, who also served as the Air Force's primary focal point for space system planning, programming, and acquisition activities, and who was dual-hatted as Director of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD(AT&L)) delegated to the EA a range of acquisition authorities and responsibilities,

separate from the non-space weapons acquisition process, including Milestone Decision Authority (MDA) for major DoD space programs.

Since 2003, many of the factors on which the Air Force based its reorganization have changed. The dual-hatting of the USecAF as Director of the NRO ended in 2005, based on a belief that the combined duties of USecAF, EA for Space, and Director of the NRO were too much for one individual. With that change, the National Security Space Office (NSSO), which had been created to implement the integration of black and white space with a joint staff of DoD and NRO personnel, transformed into a DoD manned and funded organization, as NRO ended its staff support. Also in 2005, Milestone Decision Authority for all Air Force ACAT 1 programs was transferred to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (USD (AT&L)), and has remained there for space programs. In 2009, the overall space acquisition process reverted to the mandates of the DoDD 5000.1 series of directives.

The study also found HAF space responsibilities to be fragmented, citing as an example the five separate offices with space responsibilities reporting directly to the USecAF. Additionally, the study notes the unique acquisition construct for space in that the SecAF, or USecAF, serves as the Service Acquisition Executive (SAE) for Space, whereas the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition (SAF/AQ) serves as the SAE for all other major Air Force acquisition programs. This organizational structure has segregated the execution of space acquisition management from the HAF office specifically created to manage Air Force acquisition.

The study also noted that this separation of authorities has created both internal and external confusion regarding roles, responsibilities and relationships among Air Force organizations and those supporting the EA for Space. In effect, the current arrangement mixes planning, policy and integration functions with those of line acquisition functions. While this structure was valid when based on the original range of acquisition authorities given to the Executive Agent, the study concluded that, with the tremendous changes that have occurred since 2002, this organizational construct is no longer effective or efficient.

Actions

To address these challenges, I am directing the following actions for the HAF:

1) The Under Secretary of the Air Force will serve as the focal point for space within the Air Force Headquarters and be responsible for coordination of functions and activities across the Air Force space enterprise. As such, the USecAF becomes the senior Air Force official for space matters to include planning, policy, strategy, international relations, space interagency relations and the primary interface to OSD for space matters.
2) The position of Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for Space will be retained and re-designated as SAF/SP. SAF/SP will report to the Under Secretary and will direct the headquarters staff responsible for space policy, issue integration, and strategy. This office will provide the principal support for the Under Secretary's role as the HAF focal point for space matters and in coordinating activities across the AF space enterprise.

3) The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs (SAF/IA) will continue in their role as the office of primary responsibility for AF international space matters. SAF/IA executes these responsibilities with guidance provided by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and with Air Force policy guidance provided by the SecAF, Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF), and USecAF in collaboration with SAF/SP.
4) The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition (SAF/AQ) will serve as the single Service Acquisition Executive (SAE) for the Air Force, with responsibilities covering all Air Force acquisitions (space and non-space). The Air Force Program Executive Officer (AFPEO) for Space will report to SAF/AQ for space acquisition matters, in accordance with statutory and DoD direction. The supporting HAF acquisition staff for space (now SAF/USA), will be realigned under SAF/AQ and redesignated as SAF/AQS. These actions consolidate all Air Force acquisition functions in one office, streamlining the structure to support users within the Air Force and providing a single interface to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics. This step will also require appropriate coordination between SAF/AQ and the Under Secretary of the Air Force on space programs.
5) Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) will continue to execute duties as the Air Force's Lead Command for space related capabilities, to include such major functions as: developing and coordinating space system requirements; overseeing daily space operations; and planning/programming for AF space programs. The Commander of AFSPC will work closely with the Chief of Staff, the Vice Chief of Staff, AF/A3/5, and other HAF staff offices to advise the Under Secretary regarding development of short and long term strategies for AF space capabilities.
6) The Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements (AF/A3/5) maintains its role as the principal Air Staff organization for space operations and requirements. This work will be coordinated with broader Air Force efforts through the Under Secretary as the HAF focal point for space, as well as with the Chief of Staff, Vice Chief of Staff, and Air Force Space Command.
7) Create an Air Force Space Board as the governance mechanism to coordinate Air Force positions regarding multi-organization, service, and inter-agency issues. The Space Board will be co-chaired by the USecAF and the VCSAF and will include AFSPC/CC, SAF/AQ, SAF/SP, SAF/IA, SAF/AA, AF/A3/5, SAF/GC, and other offices as required. This board will serve as the overarching forum to integrate acquisition, international affairs, plans, requirements, operations, and training efforts related to space. SAF/SP will act as the AF Space Board Secretariat, supporting the Under Secretary and Vice Chief of Staff. All annual programmatic budgetary decisions will continue to be addressed through the existing Air Force Corporate Structure.
8) Realign those manpower billets in the NSSO that were within the Air Force to SAF/SP. Defer any actions associated with the NSSO manpower billets that currently fall under OSD until ongoing discussions about the role of the EA for Space and roles and reporting relationships for any successor organization to the NSSO are complete and agreement has been reached for the roles and responsibilities of the successor organization(s).
9) Discuss with Air Force leaders, OSD space leaders, and the Congress the optimal reporting structure for the Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) office going forward.

A major focus of the review was also to work with OSD on the roles and functions of the EA for Space and the future of functions currently assigned to the NSSO. While those discussions are still ongoing, I am very encouraged by the collaborative approach demonstrated during these meetings.

These decisions will allow us to perform our space work in a more streamlined and effective way, with our ultimate goal of providing the best space support to the joint warfighter. This new approach better aligns to today's realities, while streamlining and clarifying the roles of the space-related offices assigned to the USecAF. Finally, these decisions – in combination with ongoing work with OSD on the role of the EA for Space – will resolve confusion regarding the responsibilities and relationships among the Air Force headquarters organizations and those supporting the EA for Space. And, at the same time, this structure will posture us to accommodate any future decisions on the roles and functions of the EA for Space.

We recognize the importance and criticality of space not only for the Air Force, but for our National Security, and with these changes I believe the Air Force and our headquarters will be better organized to carry out this vital mission.

I direct SAF/AA to take the necessary actions to execute these decisions and to do so within five days of the date of this memo.

Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force