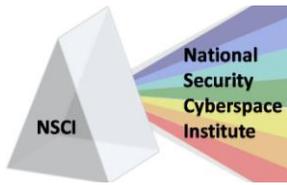## SENIOR LEADER PERSPECTIVE

Gen. C. Robert "Bob" Kehler is Commander, Air Force Space Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. He is responsible for the development, acquisition and operation of the Air Force's space and missile systems. The general oversees a global network of satellite command and control, communications, missile warning and launch facilities, and ensures the combat readiness of America's intercontinental ballistic missile force. He leads more than 39,700 space professionals who provide combat forces and capabilities to North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Strategic Command.

NSCI: CORONA recently decided the AF will stand-up a cyber Numbered Air Force (NAF) under Air Force Space Command (AFSPC). What is the cyber mission AFSPC given this re-organization?

AFSPC: Our mission is to organize, train, and equip cyber forces for use by the Joint Force Commander. The NAF, which is tentatively designated 24th Air Force, is the operational arm that will conduct the full range of cyber operations. As a component NAF, these forces can be called upon by the combatant commander to provide mission critical capabilities. AFSPC, as lead MAJCOM for cyber, will ensure Air Force capabilities continue to outpace rapid advances in technology.

NSCI: Can you provide an update on how this re-organization is progressing and/or any key milestones?

AFSPC: A transition team, led by AFSPC and members of the AFCYBER (P) team, are working these details. A roadmap (with key milestones) and a Program Action Directive (that assigns units and missions to the command) are in development. Those details will be released at a later time, but the overall intention is to stand up the NAF and our initial operational capabilities within the next year.

110 Royal Aberdeen ● Smithfield, VA 23430 ● ph. (757) 871-3578

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NSCI: The AF obviously believes there are significant synergies between space and cyber. Can you go into any detail on these synergies?

AFSPC: There's great synergy between the space and cyber domains. Space is inherently strategic and tactical. Its effects are everywhere from strategic to tactical and global to local, just like cyberspace. AFSPC has spent the last 10 years bringing space to the tactical level and can leverage that experience in cyberspace. The cyber and space missions are similarly dependent on technology and AFSPC has focused on more quickly developing and fielding technology as part of its effort to deliver new space capabilities. In terms of career development, the cyberspace career plan is modeled after the Space Professional Development Program.

NSCI: What are the envisioned cyber-related relationship between AFSPC, the Cyber NAF, and Combatant Commands such as USSTRATCOM and/or USNORTHCOM?
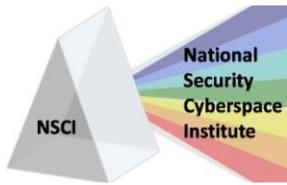
AFSPC: While under consideration now, we believe the relationship in the cyber domain will in many cases mirror those in the Air and Space domains. Our MAJCOMs, like AFSPC, organize, train, and equip forces and our NAFs present these forces to the COCOMs. For cyber, 24th AF will present cyber capability to US Strategic Command and that capability will come from the 67th Network Warfare Wing and its tactical units. USSTRATCOM in its global role will support USNORTHCOM and the other Combatant Commanders with cyber capabilities.

NSCI: How do you envision the Headquarters growing to support the additional cyberspace mission area?

AFSPC: Cyberspace is a multi-dimensional domain that requires specialized expertise in many areas and successfully integrating cyberspace and space missions will be essential to mission success. While we expect to bring new expertise into the headquarters to work on cyberspace issues, this will be balanced by the transition of functional expertise as other missions are realigned.

NSCI: Regarding industry and/or academia support, can you comment on the cyber-related expertise in or around Colorado Springs to support your cyber mission?

AFSPC: Industry and academic partners are absolutely essential to our success, especially as we develop our cyber professionals, both military and civilian. Cyber Professional development will require heavy leveraging of the civilian and commercial sectors. We will continue to explore these partnerships especially within the local area. Having local area partners will significantly enhance our mission success.

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NSCI: Can you discuss a few of the key challenges and AFSPC priorities regarding cyberspace operations?

AFSPC: Our top priorities for this transition are to "Take care of the people" and "Do no harm". Our cyber forces are currently supporting operations around the globe and we will not negatively affect the support they provide to the warfighter. Anytime there are changes in large organizations, there are many challenges such as how to best integrate the mission, people, and culture. We must ensure we can manage these changes with minimal impact.

NSCI: What areas would you like to see industry and/or academia focus on to improve DoD cyberspace capabilities?

AFSPC: We will continue to partner with industry experts who are already providing solutions to many hardware/software issues, especially as we continue to consolidate our communications and networking infrastructures and ensure we're talking the same language to our sister services. We've made strides in the academic arena as colleges are now offering cyber-related degree programs and sponsoring cyber-themed exercises and competitions. There's a huge community of interest that is following what we're doing in the Air Force...and throughout the military...as we work to keep our systems secure, and we plan to fold that enthusiasm and skill into our team.

NSCI: From a Major Command perspective, what changes do you think are needed in the way we acquire and test cyberspace capabilities?

AFSPC: As you know, the acquisition process can be quite cumbersome and lengthy. We're involved in a mission where technology improves faster than we can get it to our troops and that's just not acceptable. So, we've been working closely with Air Force Materiel Command to change some of these processes to reduce acquisition time from months to weeks to get the right resources in the hands of the warfighter. We've got a lot of work to do still, but we are headed in the right direction.

NSCI: Is there anything else you would like to add?

AFSPC: Given the nature of our mission, we tend to focus on the technology that makes us the Air Force, but I want to acknowledge the contributions of the men and women who work these missions every day. There are many challenges facing us as a command and as an Air Force, yet time and time again the quality, commitment, and innovation of our people make the mission happen. In cyber, just like in all Air Force missions, our people are our greatest asset.

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