



COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

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Airmen should expect most counterspace operations to be joint and combined efforts. Therefore, it is essential that Airmen understand what capabilities from other components of the joint force and participating allies may contribute to counterspace missions and how to integrate those capabilities with those of the US Air Force. These missions may occur at a global or theater level.

United States Space Command (USSPACECOM) is the only combatant command (CCMD) with a space component. The [combined force space component commander](#) (CFSCC) coordinates, plans, integrates, synchronizes, executes, and assesses space operations as directed by Commander, USSPACECOM (CDRUSSPACECOM) and facilitates unified action for joint space operations. Although assets capable of performing counterspace missions may be assigned to various components, the roles of [space coordinating authority](#) (SCA) and [director of space forces](#) (DIRSPACEFOR) ensure unity of effort.

Space Coordinating Authority

SCA is a specific type of coordinating authority delegated to a commander or a designated individual. SCA is the authority to plan, integrate, and coordinate space operations involving forces of two or more military departments, functional components, or two or more forces of the same Service. The individual with SCA has the authority to require consultation among the agencies involved but does not have the authority to compel agreement. The common task to be coordinated should be specified in the establishing directive without disturbing the normal organizational relationships in other matters. Coordinating authority is a consultation relationship between commanders, not an authority for the exercise of command. The individual executing SCA will facilitate counterspace targets through the joint targeting process.

CDRUSPACECOM normally delegates SCA for global missions to the CFSCC for planning of space operations in operational-level support of USSPACECOM's *Unified Command Plan* responsibilities. At a theater level, the [commander, Air Force forces](#) (COMAFFOR), who is also normally designated the [joint force air component commander](#) (JFACC), may be delegated SCA and designated the supported commander for space operations by the joint force commander (JFC). There are several reasons for this delegation. First, the COMAFFOR has space expertise embedded in its staff. Second, the COMAFFOR has the ability to command and control (C2) space forces via the [air operations center](#) (AOC),

including [reachback](#) to the [Combined Space Operations Center](#) (CSPOC). By virtue of its air, space, and cyberspace expertise, the COMAFFOR normally maintains a joint operations area (JOA), theater-wide, and global perspective. This multi-layer perspective is essential for coordinating space operations that also support the JFC throughout the theater.

In cases where the JFACC is other than an Air Force officer, the COMAFFOR will fill designated billets within the JFACC staff to ensure proper employment of space assets. If a JFACC is not appointed, the JFC may delegate SCA to the COMAFFOR or another component or Service commander, or opt to retain SCA.

For conflicts in the space domain (whether originating in space or extending from theater to space), the geographic combatant commander may serve as a supporting commander to the CDRUSSPACECOM. In this case, the SCA may be asked to coordinate theater support to the conflict.

The individual with SCA serves as the focal point for gathering space requirements from the JFC staff and each component commander. This coordination provides unity of effort for space operations in support of the JFC's campaign. Space requirements may include requests for space forces (e.g., deployed space forces), requests for space capabilities (e.g., support to personnel recovery operations), and requests for implementation of specific command relationships (e.g., a support relationship between the JFACC and the CFSCC). In theater, the JFACC staff then develops a prioritized list of space support requests, based on JFC objectives. Once approved by the JFC, the list is provided through the SCA for coordination with the CFSCC.

Because component commanders normally execute operations, the JFC normally delegates SCA to the component commander level. Coordination should be done at the operational level because that is where requirements are prioritized to support the operations of the component commanders, which in turn support the overall campaign. Moreover, the individual who is delegated SCA should have a theater-wide perspective and thorough understanding of integrating space operations with all other military activities.

Delegation of SCA is tied to force assignment, and it is normally delegated to the functional component commander with the preponderance of space forces, expertise in space operations, and the ability to C2 space assets, including reachback. Preponderance of space forces is based on a component's space capabilities supporting the JFC through the C2 of space forces assigned, attached, and supporting. Users of space capabilities are not a factor in the determination of preponderance. Preponderance is based solely on the ability to operate space capabilities and produce effects with space forces.

During contingencies, a coordinating authority for space is needed within the joint force structure to appropriately represent the space requirements of the joint force. With each component and many allies having their own organic space capability, it is necessary to integrate and deconflict among the space operations, redundant efforts, and conflicting support requests. By exercising SCA through a single commander, the JFC can optimize space operations in the JOA.

Director of Space Forces

Theater space operations personnel include senior leaders whose space operations

background enables them to lead and advise as DIRSPACEFORs. The DIRSPACEFOR is a senior Air Force officer with broad space expertise and theater familiarity, normally nominated by the Commander, Air Force Space Command (AFSPC/CC) and appointed by the theater COMAFFOR. In the preferred construct of a dual-hatted theater COMAFFOR / JFACC, the DIRSPACEFOR serves as the senior space advisor to the JFACC. The DIRSPACEFOR advises and facilitates coordination, planning, execution, and assessment of space operations and courses of action for the COMAFFOR. They may also oversee and facilitate tasks required for the execution of the JFC's SCA. This position normally requires a support staff to coordinate requirements specific to the JOA and ongoing military operations.

When the situation arises that there are no Air Force forces attached to a subordinate joint task force (JTF), the COMAFFOR to the theater JFC may be tasked in a supporting relationship to the JTF to integrate and provide space capabilities and effects. In the situation of multiple JTFs, the DIRSPACEFOR should support the commander with SCA, to provide space-enabled effects to the JTF based on JFC priorities.

For conflicts in the space domain (whether originating in space or extending from theater to space), the geographic combatant commander may serve as a supporting commander to the CDRUSSPACECOM. In these cases the DIRSPACEFOR will work with the combined force space component (CFSC) staff to coordinate theater support, as needed.

Support Relationships

For space forces providing effects via a [support relationship](#), it is important for both supported and supporting commanders to document their requirements in an "establishing directive." The establishing directive should specify the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the scope of the action to be taken.

Additional information includes:

- ★ The space forces and resources allocated to the supporting commander's effort.
- ★ The time, place, level, and duration of the supporting commander's effort.
- ★ The relative priority of the supported commander's effort.
- ★ The degree of authorities exercised by the supported and supporting commanders over the effort, to include processes for reconciling competing requirements and resolving emergency events expeditiously, as required.

To facilitate a support relationship, an appropriate level of coordination should occur between the involved commanders. This facilitates planning the detailed integration of space capabilities and effects with theater operations, and enables theater warfighters to coordinate directly at either the same or differing organizational levels.

Examples of Support Relationships

General Support. During the major combat operations phase of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF), USSTRATCOM provided general support from space operations to the Iraqi theater of operations. This support relationship helped the joint force integrate space capabilities, such as positioning, navigation, and timing from GPS, and counterspace-enabled effects.

Mutual Support. During the counterinsurgency phase of OIF, the combatant commander assigned the JFACC the task of space superiority. For this objective, the JFC designated the JFACC as the supported commander, with other component commanders in a mutual support relationship for space operations.

Direct Support. During Operation ALLIED FORCE, a direct support relationship was established between the JFACC and 11th Space Warning Squadron. This relationship allowed the AOC to directly task 11 SWS personnel and exchange real-time information from the warning satellite for time-critical actions like personnel recovery after aircraft shoot downs.