



ANNEX 3-14 SPACE OPERATIONS

SPACE CONTROL

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The third [mission area](#) of space operations is [space control](#) (SC). Air Force [space forces](#) execute space control operations to protect US military and friendly space capabilities while denying space capabilities to the adversary, as situations require. The National Space Policy (NSP) governs our conduct with regard to military operations in, through, or from space. The NSP charges the Department of Defense (DOD) to maintain the capability to execute the mission of space control. It further specifies: "The United States will employ a variety of measures to help assure the use of space for all responsible parties, and, consistent with the inherent right of self-defense, deter others from interference and attack, defend our space systems and contribute to the defense of allied space systems, and, if deterrence fails, defeat efforts to attack them."¹

SC includes defensive and offensive operations. Both [defensive space control](#) (DSC) and [offensive space control](#) (OSC) operations are dependent on robust [space situational awareness](#) (SSA). Space control operations are conducted across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war by the entire joint force ([air](#), [space](#), [land](#), [maritime](#), [cyberspace](#), and [special operations forces](#)). Space control operations include: protective and defensive measures to ensure friendly forces can continuously conduct space operations across the entire spectrum of conflict; and operations to deceive, disrupt, deny, degrade, or destroy adversary space capabilities.

Defensive Space Control operations preserve US/friendly ability to exploit space to its advantage. This is accomplished via active and passive actions to protect friendly space-related capabilities from enemy attack or interference. Friendly space-related capabilities include space systems such as satellites, terrestrial systems such as ground stations, and communication links. DSC operations are key to enabling continued exploitation of space by the US and its allies by protecting, preserving, recovering, and reconstituting friendly space-related capabilities before, during, and after an attack by an adversary. DSC operations may target an adversary's space control capability to ensure access to space capabilities and freedom of operations in space. Demonstrated DSC capabilities may deter adversaries from attacking US space systems by convincing them that an attack against a space system will be ineffective and will not significantly impair warfighting capabilities.

Offensive Space Control operations preclude an adversary from exploiting space to their advantage. OSC operations may target an adversary's space capability (space systems, terrestrial systems, links, or third party space capability), using a variety of

¹ [National Space Policy](#) 2010

permanent and/or reversible means. As adversaries become more dependent on space capabilities, space control operations have the ability to produce effects that directly impact their ability and will to wage war at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Denying adversary space capabilities may hinder their ability to effectively organize, coordinate, and orchestrate a military campaign. For example, offensive space control operations may be employed against an adversary's use of satellite communications while precision bombing targets their ground-based communications network, resulting in the synergistic effect of reducing or eliminating their C2 capabilities to communicate with their forces.

Air Force space control operations support both the space control mission of [USSTRATCOM](#) and theater military operations. USSTRATCOM's space control mission includes: surveillance of space; protection of US and friendly space systems; prevention of an adversary's ability to use space systems for hostile purposes; and negation of adversarial capability, if necessary.
