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OIA-2025-5468

4<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your email of 9 July 2025 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), *all briefings provided for, and all reports arising from, meetings with General Stephen Whiting, US Space Command, during June 2025.*

Five briefings were produced for meetings with General Stephen Whiting, United States Space Command. Four of the briefings are at Enclosures one to four. Where indicated, information is withheld in accordance with the following sections of the OIA: 6(a) where release would likely prejudice the security and defence of New Zealand and the international relations of the Government of New Zealand; 6(b)(i) where release would likely prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand; and, 9(2)(a) to protect privacy. The fifth briefing, produced for a meeting between the Chief of Air Force (CAF) and General Whiting, is withheld in full in accordance with sections 6(a) and 6(b)(i) for the reasons stated above. This briefing also contains the same biography information for General Whiting that is included in Enclosures 2-4, and is not replicated again for this response.

You have the right, under section 28(3) of the OIA, to ask an Ombudsman to review this response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that responses to official information requests are proactively released where possible. This response to your request will be published shortly on the NZDF website, with your personal information removed.

Yours sincerely

**GA Motley**  
Brigadier  
Chief of Staff HQNZDF

**Enclosures:**

1. Briefing to interagency roundtable
2. Briefing to Minister of Defence
3. Briefing to Commander Joint Forces New Zealand
4. Briefing to Chief of Defence Force

## Summary of US DoD Directive 3100.10

DoD Directive 3100.10 **establishes policies and assigns responsibilities for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) space-related activities**, emphasising the importance of space for national security and defence.

### Purpose and Overview

- **Space Policy:** The directive recognises space as a critical domain for military operations and sets forth policies to ensure the safety, sustainability, and security of the space environment.
- **Responsibilities:** It outlines the roles of various DoD entities in implementing space policies, managing space operations, and fostering partnerships with allies and private sectors.

### Key Policies

- **National Defence:** Space is acknowledged as a vital component of national military power, underpinning multi-domain operations aimed at enhancing U.S. security.
- **Security and Stability:**
  - Strengthen safety and accessibility of space.
  - Protect the use and freedom to operate in space for national security purposes.
  - Deterrence measures are to be in place against threats to space systems.
- **Space Operations:**
  - Conduct operations in support of national security objectives, including offensive and defensive space operations.
  - Promote norms of responsible behaviour in space and cooperate with international partners to enhance collective security capabilities.
- **Collaboration with Industry:** The directive encourages collaboration with domestic and commercial space industries to develop innovative space capabilities and ensure a robust U.S. defence space industrial base.
- **Partnerships and Alliances:** Emphasises building strong international partnerships and alliances for enhanced space cooperation, which includes sharing technology and operational intelligence.

### Responsibilities

- The directive outlines specific responsibilities for roles such as the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy (ASD(SP)), and others regarding space operations, acquisition strategies, and space-related intelligence activities.
- The U.S. Space Force (USSF) is given importance in organising and training space forces and integrating them into joint operations as part of the comprehensive defence strategy.

## **Updates and Changes**

- The directive serves as an update to previous directives, reflecting the evolving nature of space operations. It replaces the 2012 directive to enhance current strategies based on recent developments in space policy and operations, including the roles of new organisations established within the DoD, such as the Space Force and U.S. Space Command.

In summary, DoD Directive 3100.10 reflects the U.S. government's commitment to maintaining a strategic advantage in space through robust policies and collaborative efforts with allies and private industry, ensuring the security of U.S. interests within this critical domain.

## Summary of General Whiting's Keynote Speech at the April 2025 Space Symposium, Colorado Springs, Colorado

In his keynote address at the 2025 Space Symposium, General Stephen Whiting, Commander of U.S. Space Command, emphasised the evolving landscape of space as a warfighting domain and outlined key strategic initiatives to maintain U.S. superiority in this critical area.

### Key Themes and Points

1. **Space as a Warfighting Domain:** Whiting stated that there is no debate—the space environment has become a battlefield, with adversaries, particularly China, aggressively developing orbital weaponry. He stressed the need for preparedness for potential conflict in space, stating, "War in space is not inevitable, but we must apply our best thinking to be ready."
2. **Elements of Victory:** He introduced the "Elements of Victory," which are five key principles that guide U.S. Space Command's strategic planning:
  - **Operating through a first strike:** Ensuring continuity and resilience of space capabilities under initial attack.
  - **Transitioning from crisis to conflict:** Rapidly adapting operations to shift from a state of peace to an active conflict.
  - **Synchronising efforts:** Collaborating across military, government, and commercial sectors to enhance effectiveness in space operations.
  - **Deploying and regenerating forces:** Ensuring that U.S. space assets can be rapidly positioned and maintained during conflicts.
  - **Achieving space superiority:** Developing capabilities for both offensive and defensive measures in space operations.
3. **International Collaboration:** Whiting highlighted the importance of global partnerships in space defence. He mentioned the operational capability of the Multinational Force - Operation Olympic Defender, which includes allies such as France, Germany, and New Zealand, and aims to strengthen intelligence sharing and operational coordination.
4. **Golden Dome Initiative:** The speech included support for President Trump's "Golden Dome" missile defence system, which is designed to enhance the U.S. homeland defence mechanisms. Whiting emphasised that space will be foundational to the success of this initiative.
5. **Technological Innovations:** Whiting pointed out advancements such as improving satellite communications resilience and integrating artificial intelligence for better decision-making processes in military operations. He discussed ongoing projects to enhance space domain awareness and to leverage commercial space capabilities to reinforce military objectives.

General Whiting concluded by reinforcing the idea that while the U.S. does not seek conflict in space, it must be prepared to deter and defend against threats in this new geopolitical arena. His emphasis on readiness, resilience, and collaboration aims to ensure the U.S. can protect its interests and those of its allies in an increasingly competitive space domain.

**US Space Command Strategic Vision, released 20 Feb 2024**

Gen. Stephen Whiting, Commander USSPACECOM, released a strategic vision emphasising enhanced space capabilities, defence readiness, and international cooperation to secure and sustain U.S. dominance in space operations by 2027.

### Key Objectives of the Strategic Vision

1. **Conduct Dynamic and Integrated Operations:** The vision aims for USSPACECOM to conduct dynamic, partnered, and integrated space operations and transregional missile defence. This approach focuses on increasing Joint Force lethality and effectiveness while protecting against space-enabled attacks.
2. **Achieve and Maintain Space Superiority:** A primary goal is to establish and sustain dominance in the space domain. This involves countering threats from adversaries and ensuring the U.S. can defend its space assets and operations.
3. **Maximise Combat Readiness:** By 2027, USSPACECOM plans to maximise its combat readiness. This includes continuous training and exercises to prepare for diverse conflict scenarios and improve responsiveness to emerging threats.
4. **Strengthen Global Partnerships:** The strategic vision emphasises building relationships with allies to form a coalition of military spacepower, increasing collaborative efforts to face shared space challenges, and ensuring mutual support in operational readiness.
5. **Expand Future Warfighting Advantage:** The command intends to shape military spacepower with a forward-looking perspective, preparing for future conflicts and technological changes in the space domain.

### Context and Significance

Gen. Whiting's vision highlights the growing complexity of space operations influenced by increasing adversarial threats, particularly from countries like China and Russia, and the commercialisation of space. This evolving landscape necessitates a proactive approach to not only ensure U.S. superiority but also adapt to new realities in military strategy and technology.

Whiting also acknowledged a dual audience for this vision: USSPACECOM personnel as well as American citizens and international allies. He stressed the commitment to protect and deliver space capabilities, reinforcing the message that the U.S. will maintain a constant presence and operational capacity in space to assure safety and security on Earth.

By outlining these strategic goals, the vision sets a comprehensive framework for USSPACECOM's direction and operations, ensuring that the command remains agile and effective in a fast-changing security environment.

[USSPACECOM Strategic Vision Feb 2024 Online.pdf](#)

## Summary of US Space Force 'Space Warfighting Framework'

The US Space Force Space Warfighting framework outlines its vision for achieving and maintaining space superiority, emphasising offensive and defensive operations in the space domain.

### Overview of the Space Warfighting Strategy

The Space Warfighting framework highlights the criticality of space superiority as an essential element for military operations. It aims to ensure freedom of movement in space for U.S. forces while denying the same to adversaries. Chief of Space Operations Gen. Chance Saltzman stated that the primary purpose of the Space Force is to achieve this superiority and to employ capabilities for both offensive and defensive operations to deter threats to national interests.

### Key Components of the Framework

1. **Counterspace Operations:** The framework establishes counterspace operations across three primary mission areas:
  - **Orbital Warfare:** Engaging in actions to control the space domain and to attack enemy space capabilities.
  - **Electromagnetic Warfare:** Disrupting enemy communications and radar capabilities through electromagnetic means.
  - **Cyberspace Warfare:** Conducting operations in the cyberspace domain to protect space assets and networks.
2. **Strategic Importance:** The framework acknowledges the growing challenges from peer adversaries that threaten U.S. operations in the space domain. It underlines the need for synchronised offensive and defensive operations across all segments, emphasising that space operations should operate seamlessly alongside terrestrial, maritime, and aerial operations.
3. **Operational Readiness:** The strategy outlines the necessity for the Space Force to be prepared for immediate and potentially aggressive actions in space, reinforcing the United States' strategic positioning and response capabilities in evolving conflict scenarios.

### Future Implications

The Space Warfighting framework is intended to set a clear direction for the Space Force as it evolves into a full-fledged warfighting branch, enhancing its operational readiness amid rising geopolitical tensions. The document integrates concepts from joint and commercial space strategies, ensuring comprehensive military preparedness in the modern space environment. By formalising its approach to space warfare, the Space Force aims to sustain advantages in technology and operational strategies.

This foundational strategy not only aims to safeguard U.S. interests in space but also to deter aggression from adversaries attempting to exploit or threaten American space capabilities. As the Space Force continues to develop, this strategy will be pivotal in influencing the broader narrative of military operations in space.



## Summary of the US DoD Commercial Space Integration Strategy, released 2 April 2024

The 2024 DoD Commercial Space Integration Strategy outlines the Department of Defense's (DoD) approach to integrating commercial space capabilities into the national security framework, focusing on leveraging innovations in the rapidly growing commercial space sector.

### Key Objectives

1. **Ensure Access:** Guarantee the availability of commercial space solutions during all phases of conflict.
2. **Achieve Integration:** Seamlessly incorporate commercial capabilities into planning and operational activities before crises arise.
3. **Establish Security Conditions:** Create protective measures and norms to facilitate the safe integration of commercial solutions.
4. **Support Development:** Foster the growth of new commercial space technologies that enhance military capabilities.

### Foundational Principles

To guide its integration efforts, the DoD adheres to **four key principles**:

- **Balance:** Maintain an appropriate mix of government and commercial solutions, avoiding dependence on any single provider.
- **Interoperability:** Encourage collaboration between military and commercial systems without hindering innovation.
- **Resilience:** Enhance the robustness of national security space architectures by diversifying suppliers and increasing the quantity of viable solutions.
- **Responsible Conduct:** Follow established norms and standards to support ethical partnerships with commercial entities.

### Strategic Implications

- The strategy signifies a paradigm shift for the DoD, moving beyond reliance on traditional, government-specific capabilities to a broader utilization of commercial offerings.
- It outlines a proactive approach to partnering with commercial players, emphasising the need for structured engagements and contractual agreements to synchronise efforts.

### Conclusion

The DoD's Commercial Space Integration Strategy is designed to adapt to the changing landscape of space technologies and capabilities, ensuring that military operations are supported by innovative and efficient commercial space solutions, thus enhancing the U.S. strategic advantage in space.

## Summary of the US Space Force Commercial Space Strategy, released 10 April 2024

The US Space Force (USSF) Commercial Space Strategy aims to enhance national security through deeper integration of commercial space capabilities and partnerships. This strategy is a response to the evolving space landscape marked by increased threats from strategic competitors and a burgeoning commercial space sector. Its release was intended to nest under and be complimentary to the US DoD Commercial Space Integration Strategy.

### Key Objectives

1. **Integration of Commercial Solutions:** The strategy emphasises fully integrating commercial solutions into the USSF's operations, moving beyond simply augmenting existing government systems to developing a hybrid architecture that incorporates these solutions seamlessly into national security frameworks.
2. **Response to Strategic Threats:** The need to counter the growing capabilities of competitors like China and Russia necessitates leveraging the innovation and agility of the commercial sector. This is pivotal in adapting to a rapidly changing security environment.

### Lines of Effort (LOEs)

The strategy outlines **four main lines of effort** to operationalise the integration of commercial space capabilities:

1. **Collaborative Transparency:** Building partnerships with the commercial sector to foster understanding of their innovative processes and to enhance operational relationships.
2. **Operational and Technical Integration:** Developing policies and processes that enable commercial solutions to work effectively with military operations, with a focus on areas like satellite communications and space domain awareness.
3. **Risk Management:** Helping commercial companies identify and mitigate risks associated with military operations, while providing guidance on data and security measures.
4. **Forward-Leaning Engagement:** Actively seeking out new technologies and partners in the commercial space sector to leverage innovative solutions that can enhance the USSF's capabilities.

### Criteria for Decision-Making

The USSF will evaluate proposals and projects based on four criteria to ensure effective integration of commercial capabilities:

- **Operational Utility:** The ability of the solution to meet military operational requirements.
- **Feasibility:** Cost-effectiveness and value of the solutions being proposed.
- **Resilience by Design:** Solutions must be robust against potential threats, particularly in cyber aspects.
- **Speed to Fielding:** The timelines required to develop and deploy the capabilities must provide a competitive advantage.



## Conclusion

The US Space Force Commercial Space Strategy represents a significant shift in how the military branch approaches its relationship with the commercial space industry. By emphasising collaboration, operational integration, and risk management, the USSF aims to sustain its competitive edge in space, cater to evolving national security needs, and capitalise on the innovation present within the commercial sector. As such, **this strategy points toward a future where commercial capabilities are foundational to the United States' space architecture.**

## US Space Force's International Partnership Strategy 2025 - Insights ahead of release

The US Space Force's International Partnership Strategy 2025 aims to enhance collaboration with allied nations to ensure a secure and resilient space environment. This precis has been summarised from various media releases, including General Saltzman's keynote speech delivered at the 2025 Space Symposium, 9 April, Colorado Springs. Here are the key components of the anticipated strategy:

### Core Objectives

1. **Empower Partners:** The strategy focuses on utilising the strengths of partner nations as force multipliers. This collaboration is vital to amplify mutual capabilities and minimise vulnerabilities across the coalition.
2. **Enhance Interoperability:** Improving the interoperability of systems and improving data sharing is a major goal. The strategy aims to establish common standards that allow seamless cooperation among allies, ensuring that diverse space systems can work in concert.
3. **Align Service-Level Development:** The strategy emphasises aligning force design, development, and employment across allied nations to create a streamlined approach to how space assets are integrated into military operations. This alignment fosters cohesion in military strategy and operational capabilities.

### Implementation and Evolution

- The international partnership strategy is described as a **living document**, reflecting the rapid changes in space capabilities and threats. It builds on existing initiatives, including the Department of Defense's prior commercial space efforts, ensuring a unified response to emerging security challenges.
- **Operational Integration:** The strategy will prioritise **full-spectrum integration** among allied forces, ensuring that operational concepts and training are harmonised before any actual crises occur. The goal is to avoid a steep learning curve in times of conflict by fostering close cooperative ties through exercises and shared operational processes.
- **Strategic Vulnerability Awareness:** The strategy acknowledges that America's advantages in space could transform into vulnerabilities unless collaboratively safeguarded. Leaders emphasise the necessity of proactive engagement with international partners to address these vulnerabilities.

### Historical and Ongoing Efforts

- Chief of Space Operations Gen. B. Chance Saltzman highlighted that the Space Force has already made substantial strides in international cooperation and shared initiatives, such as the Joint Commercial Operations Cell and a rideshare satellite program that includes allied partners.
- Further, the strategy reflects a significant cultural shift within the Space Force towards embracing collaborative security in the space domain. The focus will be on declassifying space intelligence to facilitate better communication and coordination among allies.

By reinforcing these partnerships, the Space Force aims not only to enhance its own capabilities but also to build a "**seamless multinational space coalition**" that responds effectively to ongoing and future challenges in space security. The strategy acknowledges that spacepower is a collective endeavour that cannot be secured by any one nation alone, stressing the importance of mutual cooperation.

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*Meeting with GEN Stephen Whiting, Commander US SPACE COMMAND*

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### **Purpose of call**

General Whiting is visiting Australia and New Zealand to undertake a range of calls with counterparts. This meeting is an opportunity to reaffirm New Zealand's commitment to Multinational Force - Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER (MNF-ODD).

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You last met General Whiting at the 2024 Space Symposium in Colorado Springs, where you discussed the invitation for New Zealand to join Operation Olympic Defender.

General Whiting will visit the NZDF Space team at RNZAF Base Auckland on Wednesday.

### **Biography**

Gen. Stephen N. Whiting is the Commander, U.S. Space Command, headquartered at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado. He is responsible for defending U.S. and Allied interests in the space domain, and providing space-enabled combat effects to joint warfighters around the globe.

General Whiting graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy with a degree in aeronautical engineering in 1989. He is a space operations officer and has commanded the 13th Space Warning Squadron; the 614th Air and Space Operations Center and Joint Space Operations Center; the 21st Space Wing; and the Combined Force Space Component Command and 14th Air Force.

### **Key messages**

- New Zealand is committed to ensuring that space remains secure, stable and accessible.
- To that end, New Zealand is committed to multilateral space domain efforts, including improving interoperability and coordination in the space domain. We are proud to be part of Operation Olympic Defender.
- As a sign of New Zealand's commitment to the space domain, the Royal New Zealand Air Force will reactivate 62 Squadron on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, to conduct space activities.
- 62 Squadron will fulfil New Zealand's existing space activities, including Operation Olympic Defender, Joint Commercial Operations (JCO), and Combined Space Operations (CSpO).

### **Background**

#### *Multi-National Force – Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER*

1. General Stephen Whiting leads US Space Command (one of eleven Combatant Commands like Joint Forces New Zealand), and is responsible for delivery of OOD.

2. MNF-OOD is a US-led multinational space operation designed to coordinate the space capabilities of member nations: US, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, and New Zealand.

3. MNF-OOD aims to secure space assets, provide space-based services to member militaries, and to 'protect and defend' space architecture to keep space assets operational by preventing attack and interference. It does this through the day-to-day coordination of military space capabilities.

4. These services include space domain awareness (SDA), missile warning/tracking, satellite communications, and positioning, navigation and timing (via GPS).

5. An attack on space infrastructure could result in a loss of space-based services, s.6(a) Such an attack would also likely have a massive impact on civilian systems worldwide and on the global economy.

6. NZDF contribution to MNF-OOD is one Liaison Officer at US Space Command in Colorado Springs and the development of an NZ Space Operations Centre. Wing Commander s.9(2)(a) commenced this role as the liaison officer on 10 March 2025. Gen Whiting will visit the NZDF Space team at RNZAF Base Auckland the day after your meeting.

#### *No. 62 Squadron (62 SQN)*

7. No. 62 Squadron draws its lineage from shared NZ-US history, and was originally a Royal New Zealand Air Force Radar Squadron. It was operational during the WWII Pacific Campaign, charged with ground-controlled early warning and fighter intercept radar operations. It worked in concert with the US Army Air Force's 6th Night Fighter Squadron.

8. The new 62 SQN will be reactivated on 1 July to conduct Space Domain Awareness and, through our OOD connection, provide Space Support to Joint Force Operations.

9. s.6(a)

10. 62 SQN will grow and develop additional capabilities in line with the Defence Capability Plan.

#### *Other Defence Space Activities*

11. s.6(a) the Joint Commercial Operations (JCO) programme, in which New Zealand leads the participating countries in the Pacific region.

12. New Zealand also takes part in the Combined Space Operations (CSpO) forum to improve interoperability and coordination in the space domain.

*Space Operations, NZDF  
Policy Branch, MoD  
18 June 2025*



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*Meeting with General Stephen Whiting, Commander United States Space Command*

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**Purpose of call**

- General Whiting, will conduct a formal visit to Wellington on 25 June, and then visit RNZAF Base Auckland and Rocket Labs on 26 June before departing back to the US. His visit will also include meetings with the Minister of Defence, Chief of Defence Force, Chief of Air Force, an inter-agency roundtable, Sir Peter Beck from Rocket Labs and the NZDF Space Program (soon to be No. 62 Squadron).
- The purpose of this call is to make introductions with your US COCOM counterpart and discuss the integration of Space operations into multi-domain partner operations.

**Recommended talking points**

- Ex Kiwi Command / Apollo Griffin Lessons
  - **Key message:** Participation provided useful awareness for HQ JFNZ staff on the importance of working closely with our partners for shared awareness and combined delivery of effects. It also highlighted the importance of protecting space capability that supports both partner and NZDF operations against degrading or destructive effects.

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- **Key Message:** New Zealand is committed to improving interoperability and coordination in the space domain through Op OLYMPIC DEFENDER.
  - NZ LNO in Colorado Springs as of March 2025
  - ACC involved in the OOD coordination boards
  - NZDF Space program involvement in integration planning efforts at the Strategic and Operational Component levels of US Space Command.

s.6(a)

- If GEN Whiting asks about future contributions to OOD

- The Defence Capability Plan has signalled a large investment in Space outputs

s.6(a)



## Background

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- General Stephen Whiting leads US Space Command (one of eleven Combatant Commands like Joint Forces New Zealand, for which US Space Force generates personnel) and is responsible for delivery of Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER.

## Ex Apollo Griffin

- USSPACECOM Tier 1 exercise that ran alongside Pacific Sentry and Kiwi Command.  
s.6(a)
- NZ Involvement included one Space Desk Officer in HQ JFNZ linked up with an NZ LNO in Colorado Springs at US SPACE COMMAND where we were able to coordinate s.6(a)

s.6(a)

## Op OLYMPIC DEFENDER (OOD): What is it?

s.6(a)

- Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER, commonly referred to as “OOD”, provides a strategic framework within which the US and participating nations *operate, secure and defend* space domain systems together. This is done, for example, through space domain awareness, missile warning or tracking, satellite communication, and protecting position, navigating and timing systems.
- OOD is a US Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) approved operation authorising Commander US Space Command to combine US and partner space capabilities to deliver key strategic objectives.
- OOD is conducted at multiple classification levels and enables nations to join compartmented mission areas. This allows nations to participate in areas and levels according to their own national policies. This can be likened to Operation Enduring Freedom in which New Zealand participated with very defined national objectives and caveats.
- The current members are the United States, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, France, Germany and New Zealand (Feb 2025).

### Strategic objectives of Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER

- US and partner nations will coordinate and deliver military space-related effects through all phases of conflict. These include:
  - Space Domain Awareness (SDA) (i.e. what's happening in space)
  - Missile Warning/Tracking (i.e. tracking missiles in flight)
  - Satellite Communication (SATCOM) (i.e. communication via satellites)
  - Position, Navigation, Timing (PNT) – (i.e. keeping GPS operational)
- If directed, they would act to deny space capabilities to nations hostile to the national security interests of the US and partner nations where these were threatened. s.6(a)

### Current New Zealand contribution to Op OLYMPIC DEFENDER

- New Zealand was invited to join OOD in December 2022 along with France and Germany. The NZDF Space program has been involved in several planning meetings to improve partner integration. The NZDF Space Program helped shape the OOD Concept of Operations, OOD Integration plan and Campaign plan, which considers all participating nation strategic objectives, national interests and capabilities into OLYMPIC DEFENDER.
- An initial NZDF contribution to OLYMPIC DEFENDER has been an LNO integrated into US Space Command headquarters in Colorado Springs and inclusion in exercises like APOLLO GRIFFIN, and GLOBAL SENTINEL.
- Mission areas New Zealand is supporting:
  - Space Domain Awareness (SDA) through:
    - NZDF's existing Joint Commercial Operations efforts
    - New Zealand sovereign sensor – s.6(a)
  - Coordination of partner derived Space domain Awareness through the New Zealand Space Operations Centre – based in Auckland and will reside in 62 Squadron.

## Biography



General Stephen N. Whiting is the Commander, United States Space Command, headquartered at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado.

As Commander, General Whiting is responsible for defending U.S. and allied interests in the space domain while providing space-enabled combat effects to joint war fighters around the globe. He exercises combatant command authority over soldiers, marines, sailors, airmen, and (Space Force) guardians operating ground and space-based systems around the world.

General Whiting is a 1989 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy with a degree in aeronautical engineering. He is a space operations officer and has commanded the 13th Space Warning Squadron; the 614th Air and Space Operations Center and Joint Space Operations Center; the 21st Space Wing; and the Combined Force Space Component Command and 14th Air Force.

General Whiting's staff assignments include positions at Headquarters U.S. Air Force; U.S. Space Command; U.S. Strategic Command; the Chief of Naval Operations' Strategic Studies Group; the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense; Headquarters Air Force Space Command; and Headquarters U.S. Space Force.

Prior to his current position, the general was Commander, Space Operations Command, Peterson SFB, Colorado

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*Meeting with General Stephen Whiting, Commander US Space Command*

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**Purpose of call**

- General Stephen Whiting, Commander US Space Command, will conduct a formal visit to Wellington and Auckland from 24 – 26 June, following a visit to ADF Space Command in Australia. The formal visit will include office calls with Minister of Defence, Commander Joint Forces, and Chief of Air Force, and an Interagency Roundtable in Wellington to discuss US evolution of space operations and current priorities, NZ context for space operations, international approaches to space security, and NZ space industry economic growth agenda. The formal visit will conclude in Auckland with visits to RocketLab and the NZDF Space Programme at RNZAF Base Auckland.

**Recommended talking points**

- New Zealand is committed to ensuring that space remains secure, stable and accessible. To that end, New Zealand is committed to multilateral space domain efforts, including improving interoperability and coordination in the space domain.
- NZDF participation in Multinational Force – Operation OLYMPIC DEFENDER (MNF-OOD) signals NZ's commitment to promoting safe and sustainable behaviours in space, including through deterring hostile activity in space. This supports the security of assets in space on which New Zealand relies.
- Our connection through MNF-OOD and the Combined Space Operations (CSpO) Initiative helps deepen our relationships <sup>s.6(a)</sup> [REDACTED], while also enabling us to build space operations experience and expertise.
- We value our contribution to the Joint Commercial Operations (JCO) Space Domain Awareness operation. This has been instrumental in developing space operations knowledge and expertise, while providing a valued contribution to collective space security.
- The RNZAF will reactivate No. 62 Squadron on 1 July to conduct space activities. 62 SQN will fulfil New Zealand's existing space activities, including MNF-OOD, Joint Commercial Operations (JCO), and Combined Space Operations (CSpO). Growth is aligned to our recently released Defence Capability Plan (DCP).
- New Zealand's recently released Defence Capability Plan signals a significant increase of investment in defence to ensure it is fit for the future environment. We appreciate access to space systems has become critical on the modern battlefield, with space-based systems being relied on for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, communication, navigation, and targeting. Investment will be made in systems that plug into partner networks to understand what is happening in space, especially to identify activities that might pose a risk to New Zealand's interests. We will also be investing to increase our access and resilience across space systems.
- We will continue to look at other ways in which we can add value, appreciating our location is useful for partnering on ground-based space infrastructure (e.g. Satellite command and control and space surveillance sensors), and responsive space launch.

## Biography

Gen. Stephen N. Whiting assumed Command of U.S. Space Command, headquartered at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado, in January 2024. As Commander, Gen. Whiting is responsible for defending U.S. and allied interests in the space domain while providing space-enabled combat effects to joint warfighters around the globe.

He exercises combatant command authority over Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen and Guardians operating ground and space-based systems around the world.

Gen. Whiting is a 1989 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy with a degree in aeronautical engineering. He is a career space operations officer and has commanded the 13<sup>th</sup> Space Warning Squadron; the 614th Air and Space Operations Center and Joint Space Operations Center; the 21st Space Wing; and the Combined Force Space Component Command and 14th Air Force.

Prior to his current position, the general was Commander, Space Operations Command, Peterson SFB, Colorado.

