



Courtesy photo

The Operationally Responsive Space prototype satellite sits aboard a Minotaur I launch vehicle.

## ORS-1 satellite successfully launched

Space and Missile Systems Center  
Public Affairs

The U.S. Air Force successfully launched the first Operationally Responsive Space prototype satellite aboard a Minotaur I launch vehicle on June 29, at 9:09 p.m. MDT, from Pad 0B at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, a facility owned by the Virginia Commercial Flight Authority, located at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va.

ORS-1 deployed 12 minutes after launch.

This marks a great achievement by the Space and Missile Systems Center's Space Development and Test Directorate and the Operationally Responsive Space Office, both located at Kirtland AFB, as well as their contractor teams. ORS-1 is the Operationally Responsive Space Office's first operational prototype satellite and represents the potential of low-cost, tactically focused satellites designed to provide critical battlespace awareness capabilities to the joint warfighter.

"Words cannot express

how proud I am of the entire ORS-1 team," said Col. Carol Welsch, SMC/SD Acting Director and ORS-1 Mission Director. "The men and women of the Space Development and Test Directorate, the Operationally Responsive Space Office, and our industry partners of Goodrich, ATK, and Orbital have all worked tirelessly to move forward on the concept of a responsive space capability designed to support the warfighter. Their teamwork and dedication is simply inspiring."

Rapidly developing and fielding ORS-1 is an important step to demonstrating the possibilities to meet emerging and persistent warfighter needs in operationally relevant timelines. "Our team was able to develop, integrate, test and launch this system in just over 30 months which is a remarkable achievement," said Colonel Welsch.

ORS-1 was initiated as a result of a requirement from the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command to the ORS Office to support U.S. Central Command.



Courtesy photo

## Blue Star Memorial

Col. Robert L. Maness, 377th Air Base Wing commander, right, and Shirley Tetreault, New Mexico Garden Clubs Inc. president, center, unveil a Blue Star Memorial July 3 at the Albuquerque Garden Center, while Debi Harrington, Uptown Garden Club president, observes. The blue star represents all men and women who have served in the armed forces of the United States.

## Top issues discussed at annual AFMC, union leaders meeting

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and discussions aimed at sharing information about the issues facing the AFMC workforce and outlining AFMC and AFGE management-labor partnership expectations for the upcoming year.

"All four of the command's mission areas are enabled by a high-quality workforce, and meetings like this are important business to us," said General Hoffman. "Retaining that level of quality is important, particularly as we acclimate to an atmosphere of efficiencies."

The command's financial briefing also highlighted the potential for future budgets to be constrained. The bottom line, according to finance officials, is that the upcoming budgets will call for "tail to tooth realignment of dollars to preserve capability and readiness."

Similarly, the Air Force's implementation of civilian hiring controls in May limited the hiring to one action for every two vacancies, said an AFMC manpower and personnel official. Additionally, survey data gauging in-

terest in applications for the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority/Voluntary Separation Incentive Program is being compiled.

Top among civilian personnel policy topics discussed was the Defense Department's adoption of the Telework Enhancement Act, signed into law in December 2010. The act mandates that DOD designate by early June 2011 how many of its 900,000 civilian positions are eligible for telework.

President Obama signed the act into law with the overarching goal of increasing telework to improve the Defense Department's capability to continue operations in crisis situations. The law also reflects a response to the efficiencies outlined by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in August 2010.

Mr. Gage said that the last year has presented great challenges in the form of assessing workforce and budgetary reductions.

"Meetings like this continue to be important, particularly in a time when the full education of the challenges facing personnel is critical," Mr. Gage said. "We have to be informed and ready to re-

spond."

The meeting also included a briefing of the Partnership Council's annual report. Dr. Steve Butler, AFMC executive director, and Scott Blanch, AFGE Council 214 president, noted that the council's recent meetings at two AFMC bases allowed for robust discussion regarding issues like the command's transition to a single staffing tool for streamlined hiring, better accessibility to benefits and entitlements for segments of the workforce and civilian academic programs.

The Partnership Council was formed in the late 1990s, following several turbulent years of labor relations in the command. In addition to the co-chairs, the council consists of four union representatives, who usually are AFGE local chapter presidents from AFMC bases, as well as four management members, who typically are executive directors from AFMC centers.

The meeting also included briefings about Air Force efficiencies and an initiative aiming to reduce civilian hiring to 80 days, an improvement over the present 116-day timeline.

## Spraying red

A C-130 Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System-equipped aircraft performs a fire drop onto the Las Conchas on July 2. The MAFFS is one of four assigned to the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group to fight numerous wildfires in the Southwestern United States.

Photo by Jayson Coil

