

CYBER VANGUARD

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FIVE YEARS IN THE FIGHT

MARFORSPACE CELEBRATES ITS 5 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – From its activation in 2020 to its fifth anniversary, Marine Corps Forces Space Command (MARFORSPACE) has grown into the Marine Corps’ space warfighting component, providing fleet commanders with integrated space capabilities to enhance lethality, maneuver and survivability.

Activated Oct. 1, 2020, as the service component to U.S. Space Command, MARFORSPACE ensures the Marine Corps remains a relevant and ready force in the space domain. The command’s purpose is to integrate Marine perspectives into joint space operations, synchronize support to the Fleet Marine Force and ensure Marines can compete and win in a contested information environment.

“MARFORSPACE represents an important aspect of the Marine Corps’ investment in its role in the space domain. Maximizing our success on the 21st century battlefield requires an understanding of and commitment to the operational imperatives of the joint force, particularly those of U.S. Space Command.”

-Col. Richard Martin
deputy commander of MARFORSPACE

The command traces its origins to the Force Design 2030 initiatives led by the 38th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. David H. Berger. Recognizing the increasing importance of space to modern warfighting, Berger directed the establishment of a Marine component to U.S. Space Command. Within months, Marines stood up MARFORSPACE alongside Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace Command and, later, the Marine Corps Information Command.

Since activation, MARFORSPACE has taken part in joint and service-level exercises that highlight its growing role. Marines supported planning efforts with U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and U.S. Space Command during events such as KEEN EDGE 24, VALIANT SHIELD 24, KEEN SWORD 25 and PACIFIC SENTRY 25, integrating space capabilities into joint maneuver and targeting.

“Space is no longer boutique or special. It is another domain in which forces conduct maneuver and achieve positions of advantage relative to adversaries,” said Maj. Christopher Canter, officer-in-charge of the Marine Space Detachment. “While a relatively small organization, MARFORSPACE has had an outsized effect.”

Institutionally, the command has built enduring capabilities by developing a dedicated career path for Marines in the space domain. The creation of the 1706 Maritime Space Officer military occupational specialty established a cadre of trained experts who advise commanders, shape joint integration and represent Marine Corps equities in national security space discussions.

“What we do in MARFORSPACE is not theoretical; it directly affects Marines’ survivability and success in combat,” said Master Sgt. Christopher Beaudin, who helped develop the Marine Space Detachment. “Capabilities like satellite communications, GPS integrity and space-based intelligence become decisive advantages when applied to Marines on the ground.”

The command’s growth has also been marked by close integration with joint partners. Marines assigned to MARFORSPACE operate daily alongside soldiers, airmen, guardians and sailors at U.S. Space Command headquarters in Colorado Springs. They bring the expeditionary ethos of the Marine Corps into a highly technical environment, ensuring that space support remains focused on enabling Marines forward-deployed around the globe.

Beyond the headquarters staff, the Marine Corps Forces Space Detachment at Fort Carson carries out daily integration with U.S. Space Command’s operations. Marines assigned to the Detachment bring fires, targeting and planning expertise directly into the joint fight.

“The Marine Space Detachment serves as an operational maneuver force ready to support U.S. Space Command requirements globally,” Canter said. “The Detachment is co-located and deeply partnered with U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command’s 1st Space Brigade, and that partnership has been one of the main reasons for our success.”

“The Marines of the Detachment have studied those who have done it first, experimented with equipment, shared knowledge, refined it and are well on their way to mastering it,” said Master Sgt. Timothy Klimek, MARFORSPACE fires and effects operations chief.

For many Marines, service in the Detachment represents a unique opportunity to apply expeditionary thinking in a new domain. Working shoulder to shoulder with joint and coalition partners, the Detachment embodies the Marine ethos in a joint environment, balancing technical proficiency with a warfighter’s mindset.

“The formal presentation of the Marine Space Detachment on Oct. 1, 2025, will stand as the most significant accomplishment to date,” Martin said. “The Detachment’s capabilities have exceeded what U.S. Space Command expected of its Marine component and, frankly, what the Marine Corps expected of itself in the space domain.”

Now at its five-year milestone, MARFORSPACE reflects the Marine Corps’ ability to adapt and innovate. From concept to command, it continues to mature as a critical contributor to U.S. Space Command, providing fleet commanders with space capabilities that ensure the Corps remains lethal, agile and ready for the future fight.

“MARFORSPACE is at the leading edge of the Marine Corps’ effort to fight and win in the space domain while advancing its role as a critical enabler to the joint force,” Martin said. “This anniversary highlights both our progress and our commitment to remain a vital part of the joint fight well into the future.”

“Space plays an incredibly important role in facilitating everything we do in today’s modern world. It is important that we as Marines bring our unique expeditionary character and warfighting mindset to help conquer challenges presented in the space domain.”

-Maj. Christopher Canter
OIC, Marine Space Detachment



AROUND THE HORN



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