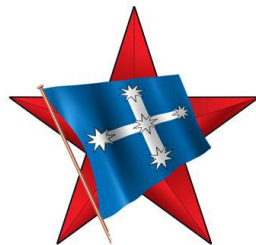


Fight

the militarisation

of Space



“From little things, big things grow.” Paul Kelly may not have had shoe-box sized satellites developing into larger ones carrying nuclear weapons in mind when he wrote his lyrics, but that is the vortex into which Australia is being spun by virtue of its domination by US imperialism.

Not content with their domination of the surface of the Earth, the US and other imperialist powers are determined to seek domination of cislunar Space – the area of space between the Earth and the moon.

True to form, US Empire loyalists in Australian political and military circles are determined to spend billions of dollars to ingratiate themselves with their masters and develop military interoperability across their respective Space Commands.

All of this flies in the face of the UN Declaration on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space in 1963, subsequently ratified as the Outer Space Treaty in 1967.

The Treaty was a response by the nations of the world to US and Russian nuclear weapons tests in Space.

These tests occurred in 1962. The largest US test occurred 400kms above and 1450 kms south-west of Hawaii. It was 90 times the size of the blast at Hiroshima. It caused significant electrical damage in Hawaii, but also resulted, in the months that followed, in ultimately killing eight of the 24 satellites that were then on orbit including the UK’s Telstar.

The release of a space-exploded nuclear weapon’s electron particles could not be controlled, so both superpowers agreed to halt above-ground tests, and allowed other nations, through the UN, to develop the Outer Space Treaty. There are now more than 12,000 satellites in orbit, and nuclear weapons are much larger, so the destructive potential of a nuclear explosion in Space is many times greater than it was in 1962.

Amongst the provisions of the Treaty were:

- outer space shall be free for exploration and use by all States;
- outer space is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means;
- States shall not place nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction

in orbit or on celestial bodies or station them in outer space in any other manner

At the time, the emphasis was on blocking the use of Space for nuclear weapons. It implied that Space should be used for peaceful purposes but did not explicitly ban other weapons.

Contradictions between imperialists over Space domain

Inter-imperialist rivalry for domination of the Space domain is in full swing. The fear among US military circles is that the Chinese and Russians are currently winning the race for Space.

The US is also concerned that the European Union is not as compliant as Australia.

A draft EU Space Act, released in June 2025, has three key pillars: safety, resilience and sustainability.

At the beginning of November, the US State department made a stinging attack on the draft EU Act, claiming it would establish restrictive market barriers, impose costly environmental protection requirements, and create regulatory hurdles for US commercial firms.

According to the State Department, “The United States does not believe the provisions are sufficient to protect national security equities, assets, and operations because the Act threatens U.S. and EU development of commercial space capabilities, introducing doubt about interoperability of systems and the ability to use collaboratively developed or owned space assets for national security purposes.”

“Such unfair and unwarranted regulations are unacceptable to the United States and must be removed,” the document states.

The online US *Breaking Defense* website notes that the contradictions between the US and the EU reflect “widespread European government concerns about the direction of US policy, ranging from the Trump administration’s about-face on support for Ukraine in its war with Russia to the president’s punitive tariffs on European imports. The push for EU security independence includes the

planned move by the European Space Agency, for the first time in its 50-year existence, to take on projects in support of European defense ministries.”

Australia to bolster Space ties with US

With US-EU relations not working out as the US would wish, more will be expected from its Australian lackeys.

The Defence Department in November 2024 made a commitment to invest \$9 to \$12 billion over the next decade to military space programs.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) in 2024 put together Concept SELENE, a framework for space operations, the details of which have not been made public. However, passing reference to it in online military journals reveals that it seeks to “enable freedom of action by temporally assuring access and disrupting or denying an adversary’s use of the space domain, as required.”

On October 8 2025, Army Brig. Gen. Christopher Gardiner, space and cyber attaché at the Australian Embassy in Washington, said “...we don’t have enough resources to build that resilient architecture in a sovereign sense, we need to partner and we need to cooperate to generate the resiliency effect.”

In other words, Australia will fall in behind US efforts to dominate Space. “Thus,” he said, “Australian Space Command is taking a page from the US Space Force’s approach to acquisition by first focusing on what commercial activities it can leverage, then looking to partners for capabilities it can share, and only lastly building its own space systems.”

In an article selected by the Australian Commander Space Command as the winner of a writing competition, Royal Australian Army Signals officer Chris Maclean wrote that “RA Sigs personnel should be embedded with allied space commands and commercial satellite operators acting as the conduit to facilitate coordination, threat response, and best-practice sharing.”

He defined Space as a “as a contested, congested, and competitive domain” and said that “to fully prepare for the unique challenges of space warfare, RA Sigs must incorporate emerging space-specific training content into its existing courses.”

These and similar ideas about how best to become part of US imperialism's drive to dominate and control Space informed the update of the Defence Department's 2024 National Defence Strategy.

According to Brig. Gen. Christopher Gardiner, "the country's Space Command is considering its options for gaining 'space control' capabilities" as part of the update. "With space control, looking at ... how do we as Australia best contribute not only to the defence of Australia and our immediate region, but then also a credible capability, cooperatively within a partnership?"

In the fact sheet accompanying the release of the 2026 Defence Strategy, it was said that "Integrated, focused force: The ADF must be integrated across all five domains – maritime, land, air, space and cyber – as well as with international partners. It must be focused on Australia's most significant strategic risks."

The reference to the "five domains" is important. Prior to 2020, there was only reference to the traditional domains of maritime, land and air. As of January 2022, a new command force operating across the three traditional domains was created, now known as Space Command.

Background to US-Australian space integration

Today's full-scale integration with US plans to militarise Space has been embedded in US bases located on Australian soil, such as Pine Gap and the Harold E. Holt base at Exmouth. There, the US Raytheon Corp operates the C-Band Radar and Space Surveillance Telescope for both the Royal Australian Air Force and the U.S. Air Force. These facilities are critical in a number of ways including communications and surveillance. They are not the only bases and tracking facilities.

In 2016, much attention was focussed on Australian-designed and manufactured miniature satellites. An official media release from the Australian Defence Department in October announced a new range of miniature satellites for their use with the 'five eyes' intelligence-sharing networks of the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Britain. While many satellites are cumbersome, the new mini-satellites were about the size of a two-litre milk carton, weighing less than five kilos. They, nevertheless, form a significant part of US-led militarisation of the Asia-Pacific region, and the use of Space for

military purposes, and appear more suitable for highly sensitive operations being more difficult to identify. They are also easier to launch.

Keen to follow the lead of US imperialism, the Turnbull Liberal government announced in September 2017 that it would establish an Australian Space Agency.

This followed by a few weeks a US Defence Department media release that Northrop Grumman was moving to acquire Orbital ATK, an American aerospace manufacturer and defence industry company, revealing “the rising competition among defence giants for supremacy in space”. It was noted, historically, space technology was largely a “passive platform for surveillance” and recent developments included “a more strategic military” stance. Present Pentagon military planning, however, has now included “new high-speed weapons and missile defence systems specifically for use against adversaries such as Russia, China and North Korea”.

It was further noted a shift in defence budget allocations was required for “heightened attention to space-based weaponry” away from broader military spending. The US Defence Department was rapidly prioritising space weaponry.

US imperialism may be in long-term decline, but it has no intention of leaving the scene quietly. In fact, US Air Force General John Hyten, Head of the US Strategic Command, stated in a briefing in August, 2017 that “the actions we take today will assure continued American dominance, especially in the critical domain of space”.

The Australian Space Agency

In mid-2018, with a minimum of publicity, the Australian government established the Australian Space Agency (ASA). Far from being a plan to film romantic images of astronauts on the moon, the ASA forms a strategic part of US regional military planning; Australian “defence and intelligence agencies” have the designated role to “help America defend its dominance in space”.

The establishment of the ASA formed part of the 2018/19 budget, with an allocation of \$26 million over the coming four years together with further support of \$15 million in the 2019/20 budget.

In June 2018, as the government budget papers were released, Trump announced the creation of a Space Force as the sixth wing of the US imperialist armed forces. Its function is to achieve a hegemonic position in space, where US military assessments have concluded they require “more resources to a space force” that counters adversaries “increasingly ready to strike US space-based capabilities in the event of a conflict”. “When it comes to defending America, it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space. We must have American dominance in space” blustered Trump on June 18.

Space would appear the new frontier and priority, not for peaceful exploration but for US hegemonic aspirations. What is particularly significant about the announcements, for example, has been the accompanying small-print in media releases specifying the space force would “include everything from satellites enabling the global positioning system to sensors that would help track missiles”.

The US uses Australia as a southern regional hub for “US interests” in conjunction with Japan as a northern counterpart. It would be inconceivable that the US space program would not also include use of Pine Gap, Exmouth and the sensitive facilities on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean closely linked to its operational uses.

Progress in integrating Australian space operations with those of the US increased apace. In mid-April, 2019 some major business meetings took place in Australia with Adrian Steckel, chief executive of OneWeb, a US-based satellite company. The main agenda of the meetings was primarily concerned with the development of Australian-based space projects involving satellites.

Conventional satellite systems have, historically, proved very costly; having a geo-stationary orbit of approximately 36,000 kms; problems arise with slow response due to distances. New mini-satellites orbit the earth at about 500 kms which lead to less delay with transmission and reception time. While the proponents of the new mini-satellites say they have developed a system “capable of delivering gigabit broadband speeds to remote and regional Australia”, and, “collecting data from millions of sensors expected to be installed to monitor agriculture, livestock, transport and more”, the technology

clearly has uses for state power and military and security planning for other than domestic usage.

Recent media releases have acknowledged the British-owned OneWeb company (a rival to Musk's Starlink satellite) is planning at least three ground stations in Australia. Whether they are intending updating existing US military communications facilities at the Geraldton base in West Australia, 370 kms north of Perth, has yet to be established. It has selected Darwin to host one of its 3 Australian gateway ground station complexes. The existing military facilities were eventually established following three years of "secret negotiations with Canberra", to "provide a crucial link for the new network of military satellites". It is particularly interesting to note the existing facilities were established with the specific role of providing instant, real-time "high quality intelligence", with visual material and maps although operational through a "new generation 3G mobile phone system".

That became the 5G which has included a number of systems with direct military involvement, which include a development with imaging and the use of filters to sift through millions of pictures, "with image recognition to identify objects and alert staff on the ground to what matters". It is not difficult to establish the procedure which has taken place: the filters being programmed to identify areas of interest, including body mapping. Body mapping and facial recognition imaging has already been implemented through social media and PC's; it would now appear to be possible from greater distance with new satellite provision.

The significance of Australia in the wider, global US-led military planning should not be under-estimated. A CSIRO report, "Space: A Roadmap for unlocking future growth opportunities for Australia 2018", for example, stated that "a key advantage driving Australia's space industry is the nation's strategic southern hemisphere location and landmass – characteristics that provide a sweet spot for space-related activities and allow for low light and electromagnetic interference". Further references in the report included an Australian role in "positioning services", concerning the development of ground stations usually within military facilities and global positioning systems.

The Australian link in the US-led space system then converges upon the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGIA), based in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, with huge facilities in Washington. Its main function is “imagery and mapping”, with use for “strategic intelligence” and the ability to “precisely target the adversary”.

It is the military consideration of the implementation of mini-satellites systems which further draws Australia into Pentagon planning which offers a frightening glimpse of future real-war scenarios. The Australian Defence Department has not been particularly reticent when dealing with the usage of new technology. In fact, they appear keen to show it off to all and sundry. The 2019 Avalon International Air-Show offered, perhaps, the best recent example.

It was noted, for example, in official media releases that “the space domain, and Australia's role in it”, was “a new operational area for the ADF to expand into by building a growing national capability”. The strategic position of Australia was also noted as “uniquely placed geographically in the southern hemisphere”. Special reference was subsequently given to the development of “small satellites”, and elsewhere in the report a statement recommended that “a distributed and resilient wide-area surveillance network should figure prominently in planning for the future force to maximise the ADF's ability to see deep into the Indo-Pacific region”.

The surveillance facilities referred to have little to do with farmers monitoring livestock or water-levels in distant dams as other official media releases have publicised; they are far more heavily focussed upon the ADF being given facilities as “an essential enabler for striking deep when necessary”.

Militarising Space: the strengthening of a regional hub for US-led operations

While part of larger US-led regional facilities, the planned JP 9102 ADSCS defence satellite system announced in May 2021 is primarily Australia-based; revealing the significance of Australia as a strategic hub for “US interests” and their military and security provision across the wider Indo-Pacific region.

The JP 9102 ADSCS system is intended to provide the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) with a secure, sovereign satellite system “capable of providing command and control communications over a wide area of the earth's surface, stretching

from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and encompassing South-east Asia". It was noted that the system was a "critical enabler for the future operational capacity of defence", with a "focus on supporting operations within the Indo-Pacific region".

A US official diplomatic statement issued following the announcement revealed the Pentagon was considering "pre-positioning US weapons in Australia ... which ... offered strategic advantages".

There is every reason to conclude the JP 9102 ADSCS, when fully operational, will continue to operate in association with comprehensive US facilities such as those at Pine Gap, under US-led tutelage and existing military command structures.

Under Morrison's Liberal government, the commitment to integration with US militarisation of Space continued. A report in the *Australian* on 4 August 2021 referred to the ADF adopting new digital battle space strategy systems with modern warfare postures for defence and security provision.

In the same article, Assistant Defence Minister Andrew Hastie noted that "our war-fighters – commanders and troops in the field, air-crew and sailors – all need access to fast and reliable data to successfully conduct operations ... our inter-operability with our security partners and allies depends upon us sharing sophisticated mission and intelligence data".

Under Morrison, the federal budget allocated \$1.16 billion in 2022 for Australia's national Space Agency. It was revealed that the ASA will operate in conjunction with NASA, their US counterpart, together with other US-led military organisations.

Documents released in 2022 by the Defence Department reveal widespread research into dual-use facilities linking civil with space defence projects, as part of the US-led militarisation of the Indo-Pacific region. The NT Government's Northern Territory Space Strategy 2022-2026 included reference to "Defence's increased reliance on space capabilities for military operations..."

The Australian coalition government announced during budget talks they intended to triple the size of the home-based space sector by 2030, to a total costing of \$12 billion; a longer, seventeen-year program has also been planned.

The allocation of \$1.16 billion has been primarily targeted at the designing, building and launching of four satellite systems operated by the ASA in conjunction with the government's CSIRO.

The official government statement also included reference to agreements with international partners for a total allocation of \$65.7 billion over the next five years “to fast track the launch of space assets and research projects by Australian businesses and researchers”. A further \$900 million was also made available in the federal budget for a five-year program “to enhance defence, space and quantum technology ... with specific reference to ... the need to enhance the space sector ... for global positioning systems”.

Civilian and military “dual-use” capacity

Defence spending on projects for space and ground stations has included an allocation of \$17 billion in the period leading to 2036. Disclosures have also noted “the civil and defence space sectors are almost identical ... they use practically the same technologies for different purposes ... Earth Observation satellites can also conduct surveillance missions”, showing how dual-use technologies are being developed and how they will be used.

An example of the latter was contained in an April 8 2022 announcement that US companies Boeing and ExoAnalytic will provide the Australian Government a fully operational Space Domain Awareness capability which is ready to deploy immediately, and to be operated by a local Australian team.

ExoAnalytic describes itself as the “largest optical telescope network in the world, provides unmatched availability, persistence, quality, and timeliness of data for defense, intelligence, and commercial satellite operator needs. In addition to our trusted space domain awareness solutions for the defense of interests in space, we offer world-class missile defense technology solutions for optimal sensor and weapon system performance, and cutting-edge systems analysis solutions to facilitate the acquisition of dominant weapon systems for decisive advantage in all-domain warfare.”

The system being prepared for Australia has civilian uses, principally to warn commercial satellite operators of oncoming space debris, but its main purpose is to “support RAAF space command operations... ensuring optimal reliability of

defence weapon, navigation and communications systems which rely on satellite communications.” ExoAnalytic has already established a network of more than 70 ground-based telescopes across 10 sites in Australia and promises to build more, so that we get more US bases here masquerading as Australian and “joint” facilities.

US wants AUKUS expanded into Outer Space

It may come as a surprise to some, but the US has even looked at using AUKUS as a means of tying Australia to the US space wars chariot.

Speaking at an Advanced Maui Optical and Space Surveillance Technologies (AMOS) Conference in Hawaii, the US Chief of Space Operations Gen. Chance Saltzman referred in September 2023 to the “lack of sensors in the Southern Hemisphere” needed to provide “comprehensive” coverage of the space domain.

He added that the Space Force’s Space Warfighting Analysis Center (SWAC), would first look at “what’s the fastest way to evolve the architecture that we know we’re going to need?” That “architecture” would depend on what “our allies and partners can bring to bear on this mission set”.

Having publicly flown this kite, a US military think-tank, MITRE Corporation proposed the expansion of the AUKUS Pact to include space monitoring. In a paper delivered to the same AMOS conference, MITRE said that an AUKUS space pact “could have a lot of promise to help tackle the challenges that make the space environment less stable”.

The paper outlines the “mutual benefits for the US and Australia of tighter collaboration on Space Domain Awareness — a relationship that already is in its formative stage, for example with the US planning to put one of three planned sites for the Deep-Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) system” in Australia. (One of the others is planned for Pembrokeshire in Wales where there is strong community opposition – search for PARC and see.)

“Through AUKUS, measures could be taken to enhance space resilience against military or natural crises by ensuring that countries maintain minimum viable capabilities across key elements of the supply chain for the space industry. This may involve concentrating on the components necessary to reconstruct vital

space-based assets, as well as systems for disaggregating and enhancing existing capabilities. This process should involve AUKUS governments collaborating to integrate new and emergent technology firms into the supply chain of the space industry,” the paper states.

Regrettably, certain sections of the Australian “defence” community and leading politicians will be only too happy to be handed the kite strings of the US proposals. People like Albanese, Marles and Wong have proven adept at dressing their subservience to US imperialism in the fancy dress of skills development and jobs “bonanzas” – and hang the cost.

On October 27, 2023, further details emerged of these plans, namely a redrafting of US Space Command’s Joint Publication 3-14 (JP 3-14): *Joint Space Operations*. This includes more clearly establishing the fact that SPACECOM and the other combatant commands will conduct “offensive and defensive space operations” during conflict, using “direct or enabling” capabilities against adversary space assets — that is, spacecraft on orbit, terrestrial control stations and/or the data links between them. It also details SPACECOM’s area of responsibility (AOR) in joint operations.

The new JP 3-14 introduces the term “astrographic” to describe SPACECOM’s area of responsibility, which starts at 100 kilometers (54 nautical miles) above mean sea level. It says that SPACECOM’s AOR is “defined by altitudes rather than a nations’ borders or latitude/longitudinal coordinates.” It stretches into “exgeosynchronous” orbit — that is, beyond about 36,000 kilometers (about 19,000 nautical miles) above mean sea level.

Another change in the new JP 3-14 is the avoidance of the terms “space control” and “counterspace” in acknowledgement that space control “implies ownership,” which could be read as counter to the UN 1967 Outer Space Treaty. Euphemisms are the first refuge of the dishonest and it is of some concern that the US is now prepared to ditch terms which over many years have been used as code for offensive space operations and the weaponry to support them.

It is in this context that the new agreement signed between Albanese and Biden on October 26 needs to be seen. The two countries have signed a Technology Safeguards Agreement that will create more opportunities for US

space companies to launch space vehicles from Australia. Underscoring the military implications is the design of the agreement – it seeks to protect sensitive US space launch technology and data. According to the online US Breaking Defense in a comment on the Biden-Albanese meeting: “The US Space Force is keenly interested in the capability to launch military payloads from Australia and the wider Southern Hemisphere.

“Most spacecraft are launched eastward to take advantage of the speed boost provided by the Earth’s rotation, and the closer to the equator — where the Earth’s surface spins the fastest due to the laws of physics — the launch takes place, the bigger that boost. Australia is not only fairly close to the equator, but also launching eastward from the continent allows easier orbital insertion over China.”

Like AUKUS itself, any plans for the expansion of AUKUS run counter to the objective of an independent and peaceful Australia.

On November 30, 2023, the Australian Defence Magazine hosted a Space Summit in Canberra. If the various imperialist blocs actually honoured the UN Outer Space Treaty there would never have been such a Summit.

This was made clear by the contribution to the Summit of Australian company Electro Optic Systems (EOS). The company began operating more than 40 years ago in the civilian arena, but has increasingly focussed on the following:

- space domain intelligence and control services
- laser, remote weapon system and counter-drone technologies
- high-performance naval satellite communications products

2022 was a disastrous year for the company financially, and it lost many staff. Its Chairman and CEO told shareholders in the 2022 annual report that they were cutting back so “we are focused on core business areas where we have genuine technological advantages over competitors. Current examples include our family of remote weapon systems (RWS); our long-established expertise in space domain awareness and other space services”. The presentation it made at the Summit was basically to sell its services to US imperialism in its contention with Chinese social-imperialism over the seeking of military superiority in Space.

It claimed that Australia is one of just two countries with the capabilities to neutralise large numbers of satellites passing over its territory. EOS spokesperson Dr Ben Greene said Australian Space Domain Awareness (SDA) covered around one sixth of the sky, delivered by, among others, EOS with its laser tracking facility in Canberra, the RAAF's space telescope in WA and the new US-owned LeoLabs Australia space radar, also in WA.

"We could intercept and interdict the satellite operations of any country on earth, if we chose to. That's a really powerful platform for us," he said. "It's quite feasible now to talk about taking out hundreds of satellites a day if that was necessary."

An ASPI (aka Australian Serving Predatory Imperialism) spokesperson supported EOS's vision for the military use of Space, saying: "We need a much more ambitious approach to how we think about defence and space. It can't just be for communications provision. It's got to be about space control. It's got to be how we respond to a contested space domain when China is rapidly developing counter-space capabilities and fully intends to use them in the next war. Space will quickly become a warfighting environment, not because of our own actions but because of decisions in Beijing."

A spokesperson for the US-owned LeoLabs lamented that lack of Australian political support for turning Space into a US-dominated battlefield. He said, "We actually need ministerial type leadership to set the policy and strategy to do everything we are talking about and it's unfortunately not happening yet."

EOS also has its sights on connections within the government, and had appointed retired ACT Labor Senator Kate Lundy as one of its four directors. Lundy and current Defence Minister Richard Marles were parliamentary colleagues in the various Rudd and Gillard governments, so she is really only a phone call away from the ear of a prominent pro-US decision-maker in the current government.

In December 2023, top defence officials from the United States, United Kingdom and Australia announced a raft of new initiatives associated with the AUKUS security pact's second pillar. Included in the new items is an announcement that the US, Australia and the UK are creating a joint radar

network for enhancing space domain awareness, with each home to one of three planned sites for the US Deep-Space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC).

“In the coming years, our nations will be creating a global radar network, bringing together three ground base stations, one in each of our countries,” U.K. Defence Secretary Grant Shapps said. “Radars more sensitive, more accurate, more powerful and agile than anything that has gone before giving us the ability to see beyond the clouds to detect, identify and track in space, up to 22,000 miles away.”

DARC is being developed by Northrop Grumman under a February 2022 contract to provide global monitoring of geosynchronous orbit 24/7 in all kinds of weather and during daylight. The trilateral network is apart from but will support Pillar II of the AUKUS agreement, and help the allies keep tabs on Chinese and Russian spacecraft.

Covering tracks at the UN

While the US has been trying to work out how to achieve the military domination of the Space domain, it has tried to cover its tracks at the UN. In April 2024, the US and Japan jointly sponsored a motion before the Security Council to reaffirm the 1967 Outer Space Treaty’s ban on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Space. The US claimed the motion was based on allegations that Russia has been planning to orbit a nuclear anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon. The US-Japan motion had the support of a majority of the Security Council. Russia voted no; China abstained.

Several of the UNSC members supporting the US-Japan proposal, however, also voted for an amendment offered by Russia and China aimed at committing the UN to negotiating a legally binding treaty to bar the placement of any weapons in space — based on a draft treaty that they first proposed in 2008. The US and its allies consistently have opposed that draft, arguing that it is unverifiable and full of holes.

Neither of these two main imperialist blocs is prepared to give ground for the sake of humanity and a military-free Space.

US raises demands for weapons in Space

The current head of the US Space Command is Gen. Stephen Whiting. In August 2024, he upped the ante, declaring that the US Space Command's top priorities for fiscal 2027 include "space fires" to enable "space superiority" and "enhanced battlespace awareness" capabilities.

The US Breaking Defense website observed that "For many years, Pentagon officials have been wary of discussing even the possibility of utilizing 'offensive' space weapons due to political sensitivities and classification issues." It added that "Capabilities to operate in cislunar space, the vast swath of the heavens lying between the Earth and the Moon, further will become a SPACECOM mission as NASA and commercial firms pursue lunar 'colonization' and other related activities."

In March 2025, Whiting was even more explicit about the meaning of the euphemistic "space fires". "It's time that we can clearly say that we need 'space fires', and we need weapon systems. We need orbital interceptors. And what do we call these? We call these weapons, and we need them to deter a space conflict and to be successful if we end up in such a fight," Whiting told the annual Space Foundation Space Symposium in Colorado.

"Weapons in space used to be considered inconceivable, but now space-based interceptors are a key component of how we win," he elaborated. "We are a combatant command, and like all other combatant commands, we must be dominant at war, fighting and war winning. And dominant warfighting in space requires credible, acknowledged, kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities, fires and weapons."

"We can no longer assume that a war that starts in or extends into space will be short. We must prepare for a protracted conflict to be successful," he said. "To win in a protracted conflict, we must maintain space capabilities beyond the initial stages of when the war starts. This longevity depends on our ability to deploy, regenerate and reconstitute space forces."

Australian involvement

Whiting singled out collaboration between the Space Command and private US firm Leo Labs deploying a next-generation Seeker-class ultra-high frequency radar site in the Indo-Pacific region.

Leo Labs sees Australia as a forward post for the US military's domination of Space. It has a space radar site near Bunbury, WA and is involved in the Aussie Space Radar Project (ASRP), a A\$240M international collaboration between Australia and the United States, with A\$160M of direct investment by LeoLabs Incorporated. Under the ASRP, LeoLabs Australia will manufacture and license LeoLabs' next-generation modular space radar system in Australia. LeoLabs Australia, should it be successful under the Modern Manufacturing Initiative, will build LeoLabs' first next-generation Low Earth Orbit (LEO) modular space radar in the Northern Territory; and then build the world's first commercial Deep Space Radar in northern Western Australia.

There is no doubt that even in the absence of rivals for "colonization" activities in cislunar space, US imperialism would make militarisation of Space one of its aims in pursuit of "full spectrum domination". But they do have rivals, and both the Russian imperialists and Chinese social-imperialists are just as active in vying for control of Space.

...In April 2026, Gen. Whiting said SPACECOM and its six closest space-savvy allies expect to complete a joint plan for conducting future "orbital warfare" by the end of the year. The allied militaries participating in SPACECOM's Multinational Force Operation Olympic Defender (MNF-OOD) have been internally discussing "the need for protect and defend capabilities, orbital warfare capabilities."

MNF-OOD largely serves as a combined military space operations planning cell involving Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the US. According to Whiting, this group had conducted an Operation Selene Exercise, "... focused on a nuclear payload on orbit, which of course, is a future we do not want to see, and that would violate the Outer Space Treaty. But we brought 60-something companies together at the classified level to share insights into what such a detonation might do, and then get their good ideas about how we could leverage capability today or future technologies that might help us going forward," he said.

In the nearer term, Whiting said SPACECOM intends to initiate a set of four quarterly tabletop exercises at the classified level involving commercial

providers. "This first one is going to be focused on thinking through weapons of mass destruction in space, if that were to happen," he said.

Conclusion

Our lack of real independence, the control of our economy and of the loyalties of leading political and military circles by US imperialism, are leading Australia along the path of complicity with the militarisation of Space.

The fear among US military circles is that the Chinese are currently winning the race for Space. Afraid of falling behind, US imperialist armed forces heads like Whiting are increasingly jettisoning the euphemisms and trying to marshal public opinion behind the need to station weapons in Space.

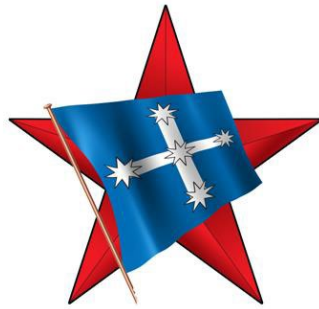
The Outer Space Treaty allows this and needs to be tightened to include a prohibition on the deployment of all weapons in Space. An independent and peaceful Australia would initiate such a move through the United Nations.

An Australia led by an Albanese or an Angus Taylor will never do this, but only further place Australia at the disposal of US imperialism.

We must demand that all weapons are banned from Space and that any developments there are done for purposes other than "colonization" by any state or nation on earth. The exploration and use of Space for peaceful cooperation among nations should be our goal.

And we must break the US stranglehold on Australia, and fight for and win genuine anti-imperialist independence and socialism.

That is the only way we can contribute to humanity and not be a burden on it.



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