

Who Will Move to Space Force?

The Pentagon is nearing a decision concerning the transfer of Army and Navy units that manage the acquisition and sustainment of space weapons to the Space Force, a top general announced 20 August 2020. "To the 90th percentile, we've agreed on most of those transfers and most of those capabilities," Lt. Gen. David "DT" Thompson, Space Force vice commander, said during the National Defense Industrial Association's Space Warfighting Industry Forum. He was asked whether units will move into the Space Systems Command (SSC) or one of the newest service's primary field commands.

Thompson, who earlier this month was nominated to become Space Force's vice chief of space operations and for promotion to the rank of general, said decisions about some organizations and resources are still in discussion with the Office of the Secretary of Defense. "The expectation is that we will come to an agreement in the next few weeks and then begin to work on the details to transfer those ... sometime in fiscal 2021," he said. A meeting is scheduled between Space Force, Army, Navy and OSD officials later this month. Thompson reiterated that the Space Force will open up its application pool for interservice transfers next year for additional Army and Navy space operators; those transfers should begin in fiscal 2022. But unlike the Air Force, those services will likely limit how many space professionals will transfer over -- roughly 100 from each branch, according to media reports.

Last month, the services began a major realignment of some of the Air Force's major space wings, transferring their missions in one of the largest command overhauls in nearly 40 years. Five Air Force units moved to the Space Force, and three wings and eight subordinate groups or centers were deactivated in favor of creating a provisional command that will later form the official Space Training and Readiness Command, officials announced in a release. The restructuring coincides with the Space Force's structure of only three command echelons: field commands, deltas and squadrons. The three primary field commands expected to be activated later this summer are: Space Operations Command (SpOC), Space Systems Command (SSC), and Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM).