Air Force Space Command identifies three overarching mission areas: global space mission operations (GSMO); space support (SS); and space control (SC). All three mission areas are supported by space situational awareness (SSA). In comparison, national policy, DOD policy, and joint doctrine identify four mission areas: space force enhancement; SS; SC; and space force application. In Air Force doctrine, the mission area of space force enhancement is reorganized and renamed GSMO; and the Air Force’s capabilities previously addressed under space force application are discussed in Annex 3-70, Strategic Attack, and Annex 3-72, Nuclear Operations. All mission areas and functional capabilities play a vital role in the ability of space forces to achieve space superiority and enable mission assurance.

Space superiority is a crucial first step in any military operation. Space operations attain and maintain a desired degree of space superiority by allowing friendly forces to exploit space while denying an adversary’s ability to do the same (e.g., surveillance, protection, prevention, and negation).

The Air Force integrates space capabilities across the spectrum of military operations, whether as a single Service or in conjunction with other Services in joint operations. The US military as a whole is dependent on the use of space capabilities in all types of warfare to maintain an advantage over our adversaries. However, while US military capabilities are evolving rapidly due to the use of space, there are indications that potential adversaries are not only beginning to exploit space for their benefit, but also for purposes harmful to our national interests.

Today, we must assume that an adversary has access to the benefits of space and plan accordingly. The reality is that space capabilities, at one time limited to a few space-
faring nations, are now commercially available to any adversary who challenges our advantage. Additionally, since today's space infrastructure is largely unprotected, our space capabilities, as a center of gravity, could be prime targets for hostile exploitation and attack.