



This month, USASMD/ARSTRAT hosts the Senior Enlisted Leader Training Conference at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. The theme for the conference is, "Growing Leaders in a Changing Strategic Environment." This is a great opportunity for our senior enlisted leaders to discuss the impacts that the changing strategic environment has on developing leaders.

The theme is an important topic considering that each of our core competencies of Space, Missile Defense, and Cyber, stretches across the continuum of conflict from the strategic to the tactical. The Army's leader development strategy states that we must "learn faster, understand better, and adapt more rapidly" than our enemies. I would posit that we could add a line that states, "we must stay ahead of technology or the enemy will use it against us."

What does that mean? It means that it is critical that we have Soldiers and Civilians who are self-learners and who are self-aware. We can't just wait for the next change; we must also anticipate. Being self-learners and self-aware means reading newspapers, reading professional journals, submitting articles to professional journals, seeking out educational courses, and if you are a supervisor, providing opportunities for your employees to develop. Reading helps us understand how current events may impact our core competencies of Space, Missile Defense, and Cyber Operations.

Consider that changes in Space technology, policy, and capabilities are on-going. DOD's Operationally Responsive Space Office recently announced it was preparing to launch its first small satellite. This is an important step in filling an operational and tactical gap in persistent and responsive space-based support to the Warfighters at the tip of the spear.

In the Missile Defense realm, the Ballistic Missile Defense Review Report (BMDR) advocates replacing the Ground-based Midcourse Defense strategy in Europe with a Phased Adaptive Approach that is tailored to regional threats. Whether your responsibilities fall within our missile defense mission or another core competency, reading the BMDR will be useful in understanding and anticipating the direction USASMD/ARSTRAT will be taking to support our nation's new strategy.

Changes that may affect our core competency of cyber operations are also on-going for our nation and for USASMD/ARSTRAT. There are articles about the dangers of cyber attacks and articles that suggest new cyber strategies. This is a new area that will see mission growth for DOD and possibly for USASMD/ARSTRAT and is a realm wherein each member of the command is on the frontline in the cyber arena. Staying abreast of policies and remaining self-aware of DOD internet user requirements are critical to maintaining the integrity of our networks.

An area that will see increased attention is cross-cultural awareness. The Quadrennial Defense Review Report states, "Today's operating environment demands a much greater degree of language and regional expertise requiring years, not weeks, of training and education, as well as a greater understanding of the factors that drive social change." I encourage learning another language or taking courses that increase your knowledge about other cultures.

In summary, we must continue to grow and develop leaders in a changing strategic environment. Soldiers and Civilians who are life-long learners set the conditions for success in the current and future complex environments. Reading professional journals, staying up-to-date on doctrine, and being able to understand and communicate with other cultures makes us all valued, productive members of the team.

*SECURE THE HIGH GROUND!*