

US Space Defense Command

(Grissom Air Reserve Base, Indiana)

Staffing: 6 US Army personnel. 2 officer (Captain and 1st Lt), 1 NCO, 3 enlisted.

US Space Defense Command did not have enough staffers to justify a contraction of the title on its own; it's usually now shortened to USD-COM, now that there's departmental oversight and so forth. Internal records show that USD-COM has occupied the same small, nondescript office building at Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana (just north of Kokomo) since some time in 1948. This is impressive, because at the time the base was Naval Air Station Bunker Hill, and decommissioned to boot.

USD-COM's official purpose is to collate a variety of military reports and abstracts that are, indeed, related to the broad category of 'how to defend the USA from space-based attacks.' To help with this, the agency is on a remarkable number of distribution lists, and is cleared to know a lot of highly classified, very specific things. Every year USD-COM produces a Resources and Capabilities Assessment (RCA) that provides a good general overview

of what specific resources the USA can draw on, and to what degree, in the event of a space-based attack. USD-COM keeps a hard copy of every RCA done since 1949; other copies are sent out for distribution by a third party, somewhere in the byzantine labyrinth puzzle palace that is the federal government's printing process. All in all, an observer would say that USD-COM does good work.

The oddity is, of course, in why USD-COM was set *up* to do this job, and in such a bland and anonymous way. It's not really secret: personnel get rotated in, they do the job for a time (officers get rotated out every year or so; enlisted stay for longer, and tend to be career military with combat experience), and then they get reassigned. Most of the people working there would be surprised to hear that there was anything unusual about the situation at all.

But it *is* unusual: USD-COM is extremely well-funded for a military agency, and has the kind of unstated pull that could stymie anyone under the level of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Certainly every commander at Grissom learned within their first week on the job that USD-COM is not to be moved from its current offices, and that it must not be interfered with in any way. Most commanders found this both outrageous, while admittedly mitigated quite a bit by the fact that USD-COM never throws its weight around.

It's just *there*. Some base commanders even read the annual RCA (the current Grissom commander is one of the few known members of the RCA distribution list), because it's fascinating, in its way. The USA has a **lot** more stuff out there than you'd expect that could be rapidly converted or adapted to be used as defenses against space-based attacks.

It's weird how none of this is ever really talked about much, though. But lucky for the USA that it's not, hey?

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