

# Naval Space Summit Brings SECNAV, Other Senior Leaders To NPS

*As global space-based technology dependance grows, senior DOD leaders gathered to examine the challenges, needs and opportunities of space operations.*

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA, USA, April 18, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As global dependence on space-based technology continues to grow, senior leaders from throughout the Department of Defense joined Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro at the Naval Postgraduate School from March 29-31 to examine the challenges, needs and opportunities of space operations unique to the maritime domain.



Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro delivers his opening remarks during the Naval Space Summit at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). Senior leaders from the Navy, Marine Corps and Department of Defense joined Del Toro at the summit from March 29-31 to

The inaugural Naval Space Summit at NPS featured a series of classified discussions involving top representatives from the DOD's major stakeholders in the space domain. The main goals of the summit were to foster greater understanding about the reliance of the Navy and Marine Corps on existing space capabilities, to acknowledge the issues faced in adapting to and incorporating rapid technological changes, and to identify the challenges involved in enabling future naval and joint warfare and protecting the United States and its allies.

"We are here today because in the years to come, we will all face new challenges, and we also stand to benefit from new opportunities in this domain," said Del Toro. "When thinking strategically about the future, it's often a good idea to take a step back and recall where we came from, and how we actually got here. We are 'here' because of the Department of the Navy's mission: to sustain global presence for projection of sea power."

Del Toro was joined at NPS by a number of senior Navy and Marine Corps military and civilian leaders, including Under Secretary of the Navy Erik Raven, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. David Berger, Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti, and Adm. Samuel Paparo, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.



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*Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro*

Also attending the summit were the commander of U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM), U.S. Army Gen. James Dickinson, and the Vice Chief of Space Operations, U.S. Space Force Gen. David Thompson.

“It is important that we come together and have these vital conversations to create shared understanding and strengthen the relationships between the Navy, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Space Command. Space capabilities and the expertise provided by our Maritime Space Officers are essential contributors to the

effectiveness our Navy and broader joint force,” said Franchetti.

NPS was chosen as the site for the summit due to its longstanding role in educating and empowering students in space systems operations and engineering, most notably through its [Space Systems Academic Group \(SSAG\)](#), established in 1982.

Through the years, hundreds of NPS students – including Del Toro, a 1989 NPS graduate – have obtained Master of Science degrees in space systems engineering and related space-based disciplines. NPS contributes to manned and unmanned space missions, including satellite launches and payloads with military applications. Additionally, 44 NPS graduates have flown in space as NASA astronauts, more than any other graduate school in the United States. ([Learn more about defense space education and research at NPS.](#))

“The Navy’s education framework identifies 13 individual competencies that are critical to achieving net warfighting advantage,” said retired Vice Adm. Ann E. Rondeau, president of NPS. “Space crosses all of them and is essential to preparing both the future joint force commanders and service leaders able to develop and generate a maritime force capable of dominance in the space domain and ensure freedom of action when that dominance is challenged.”

During the summit, leaders were briefed on current space capabilities and operations within the Navy, Marine Corps and Space Force, as well as SPACECOM. In addition, NPS students from SSAG were on hand to discuss their current space-based research, including the use of commercial satellite technology to help decision-makers communicate with operational forces in the field.

“The fact that this unique event was held at NPS only solidifies how important innovation, education, and collaboration in space are in the mind of Navy and DOD leaders,” said Lt. Cmdr. Hans Lauzen, one of the NPS students who briefed senior leaders on their research. “In the long run, I believe the Naval Space Summit will provide the ideal forum for cross-talk, problem-solving, and cross-domain awareness that will enhance the Navy’s ability to maintain and increase our advantage in space.”

Senior leaders also had the opportunity to meet with Navy officers from the Maritime Space Officer community. The MSO designator was launched in 2021 to help the Navy fill key space-oriented billets at fleet and component commands within Maritime Operations Centers, Warfighting Development Centers, SPACECOM, and the intelligence community. MSOs, who are managed by the Navy's Information Warfare community, also support the IW type command.

"We must think about the exquisite expertise we must develop as a force in the Maritime Space Officer cadre," Rondeau said. "We must also consider the knowledge and skills required across all levels of the total force to ensure we preserve our warfighting advantage by enabling leaders at all levels the ability to discern and decide force employment that understands space as an integrated enabling capability or as an independent battlespace. No domain more than space operations highlights the essential blend of both the operational art of war as well as the science and technology of warfare."

Del Toro and other attendees agreed that the choice of NPS to host the Naval Space Summit produced a timely and unique forum for relevant discussions about the present and future of Navy and Marine Corps operations in the space domain.

"As someone who knows the value of the NPS Space Systems Academic Group firsthand, I can't think of a better venue for these important conversations," Del Toro said. "Bringing the first Naval Space Summit to NPS highlights the deep insights that this institution provides to the Navy and Marine Corps. It also shows that Navy leadership has every confidence in the direction that NPS is going as the home of graduate education for the Department of the Navy."

The Naval Postgraduate School provides defense-focused graduate education, including classified studies and interdisciplinary research, to advance the operational effectiveness, technological leadership and warfighting advantage of the Naval service. For additional information, [visit NPS online](#).

(Released on behalf of the Naval Postgraduate School Office of University Communications)

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