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**Vigilance From Above**  
*National Reconnaissance Office*

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**(U) NRO Monthly Highlights: Launch Acquisitions Nov 09**

Posted on December 9, 2009 by

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Posted in 2009, acquisition, highlights, launch | Tagged  [Leave a comment](#)

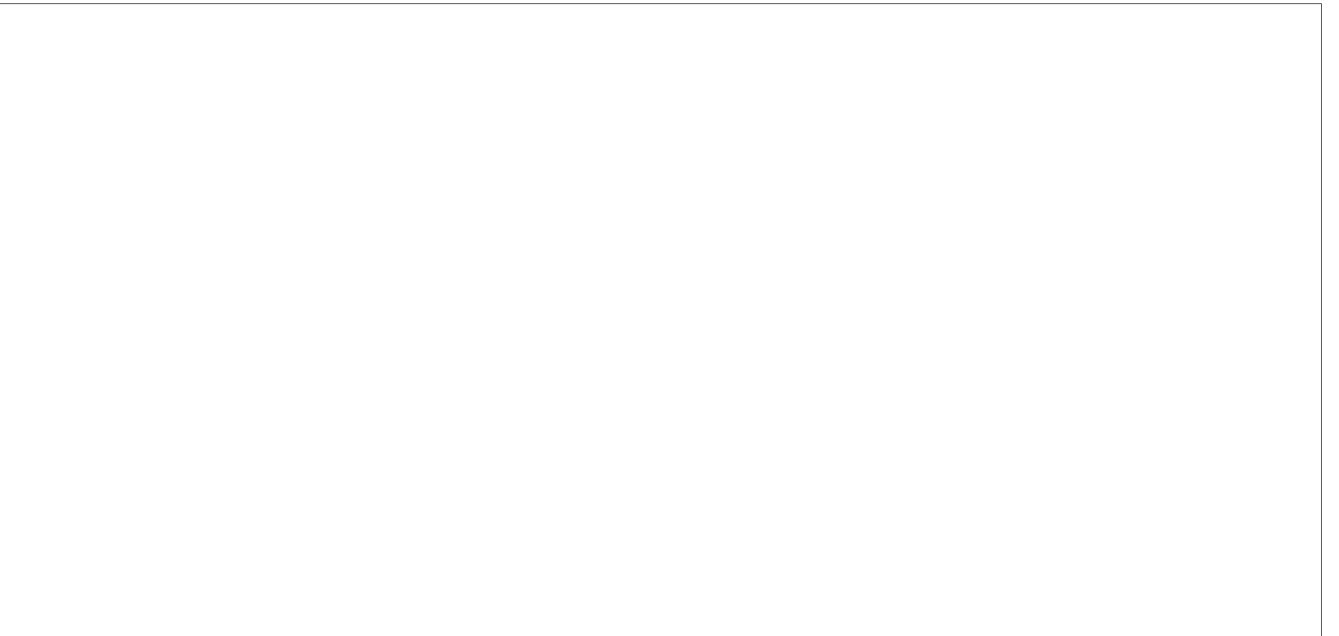
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**(U) NRO Monthly Highlights: IMINT Acquisitions Nov 09**

Posted on December 9, 2009 by

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[Redacted]

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Posted in 2009, [aquisition](#), [highlights](#), [imint](#) | Tagged  [ivat](#), [schedule](#), [testing](#),  [vandenber](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

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**(U) NRO Monthly Highlights: Ground Acquisitions Nov 09**

Posted on [December 9, 2009](#) by

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Posted in 2009, [aquisition](#), [ground](#), [highlights](#) | Tagged  | [Leave a comment](#)

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**(U) NRO Monthly Highlights: COMM Acquisitions Nov 09**

Posted on [December 9, 2009](#) by

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Posted in [2009](#), [aquisition](#), [highlights](#) | Tagged  [status](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

**(U) NRO Monthly Highlights: System Operations Nov 09**

Posted on [December 9, 2009](#) by

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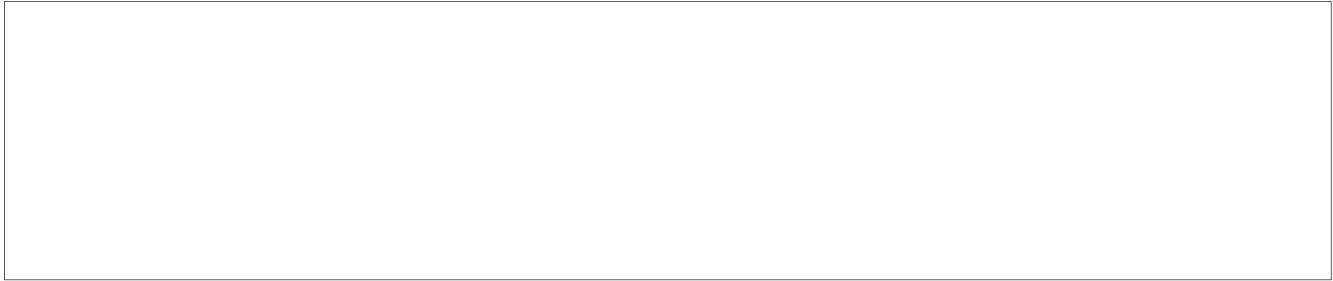
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Posted in [2009](#), [highlights](#), [system operations](#) | Tagged  [Leave a comment](#)

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### (U) An Enduring Relationship of Mutual Support

Posted on December 8, 2009 by

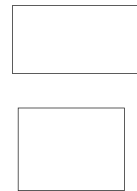
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### and Joint Space Operations Center



JSpOC



(U) The Joint Space Operations Center (JSpOC) at Vandenberg Air Force Base, America's primary satellite tracking and reporting unit, supports National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) space situational awareness and collaborates with the NRO on a variety of joint worldwide operations.

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These activities are part of a relationship the U.S. Air Force and NRO have developed over the past 48 years. During this period, the relationship between these two organizations has grown to meet expanding missions reflecting the needs of increasingly demanding customers. As the NRO and Air Force relationship grows, the JSpOC  partnership will play a key role in protecting America's national security.

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(U) The JSpOC's mission is to provide the commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Space (JFCC SPACE) and the Fourteenth Air Force (14AF) commander with command-and-control capabilities to conduct joint space operations. The JSpOC's establishment consolidated the functions of the 14AF, 614th Air and Space Operations Center, the 1st Space Control Squadron, the Unified Space Vault, and other elements in a new facility located at the 14AF headquarters, Vandenberg Air Force Base. This made the JSpOC a primary focal point for operating U.S. military satellites and maintaining space situational awareness.

(U) Previously based at Cheyenne Mountain, the 1st Space Control Squadron and Unified Space Vault historically provided situational awareness data to the JSpOC and  as external customers. Today, they are organic elements within the JSpOC, but continue their original mission of providing space situational awareness data.

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Consequently, understanding the space environment has become an expanding JSpOC and  mission. As space becomes crowded, it is critical to track systems and debris to keep U.S. space assets safe. The JSpOC performs this mission 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and is adding resources to improve capabilities and effectiveness. The JSpOC's Space Situational Awareness Operations Cell (formerly 1st Space Control Squadron) maintains space data for all orbiting objects. They task the Space Surveillance Network (SSN) – a chain of ground radars and observation telescopes

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that track satellites, the space shuttle, and debris - [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) In the past two years, [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] GLOBAL THUNDER 2008

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consisted of an [redacted] deployment that laid the groundwork for procedures and identification of improvements required in processing, equipment, and communication infrastructure. GLOBAL LIGHTNING 2008, in turn, featured a JSpOC deployment to the NROC to perform the reverse mission. In GLOBAL THUNDER 2009, both organizations assessed [redacted]

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[redacted] An [redacted] team deployed to the JSpOC to conduct Watch Operations, including Flight Safety functions for two 12-hour periods. [redacted]

[redacted] That same month, the [redacted] conducted CORONA LENS, a tabletop exercise to examine crisis response

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readiness. The objectives were to identify NRO space operations information needs and establish top-level requirements [redacted] both operations centers are jointly investigating future acquisition requirements.

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(U) In addition to these capabilities, the JSpOC and JFCC SPACE coordinate with the [redacted] on intelligence matters related to NRO and DoD satellites. To support this ongoing mission, an NRO liaison officer serves as Deputy JSpOC Director, and a JSpOC Air Force major serves as the [redacted] Deputy Chief of Operations. Additionally, an Air Force GG -14 billeted with the NRO is engaged fulltime in the Unified Space Vault.

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(U) The JSpOC's mission will likely expand as joint missions grow. Using innovative NRO capabilities, such as the BVI, the combined space forces will give warfighters near real-time battlefield situational awareness. Additionally, the NRO Advanced Systems and Technology (AS&T) Directorate has discussed providing the JSpOC with new technology developed in AS&T-sponsored labs. This includes new BVIlke concepts, Google Earth-like infrastructures, and even new methodologies for command-and-control. These partnerships will maintain space as a mutually cooperative environment for DoD and NRO assets. The downrange users will ultimately benefit as the JSpOC and NRO leverage their mutual capabilities. The synergy of combining efforts in a resource-constrained environment is critical for the DoD and the Intelligence Community.

(U) [redacted] is the co-editor of the *Space Sentinel* magazine. [redacted] would like to thank Lt Gen Larry James, USAF, Commander, Fourteenth Air Force and the Commander Joint Functional Component for Space, and as well as the JSpOC and [redacted] for their support of an early draft of this article.

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Posted in 2009, [sentinel](#), [summer](#) | Tagged [redacted] 3 Comments

**(U) In Harm's Way**

Posted on November 30, 2009 by [redacted]

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~~SECRET//TK//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

(U) This is the second Space Sentinel story highlighting how National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) personnel are helping American warfighters, Intelligence Community operators, and analysts in conflict zones. What follows continues the tale of how NRO assistance aids battlefield users achieve their mission. The prior "From the Front" account depicted [redacted] six deployments to Iraq, including five deployments as a member of the NRO Deputy Director for Mission Support. This second feature tells the story of [redacted] a government civilian. Like [redacted] piece, [redacted] article captures some of her experiences, impressions, and words as a front line (though in her particular case, non-military) operator, analyst, and advisor.

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**(U) A Tale of Two Wars**

(U) From December 9, 2008 to February 12, 2009, [redacted] day mission in two combat theaters provided NRO's customers with National Technical Means (NTM ) expertise at forward situated intelligence centers. She coordinated operational needs, assisted in integrating new or enhanced capabilities, and helped develop and facilitate the NRO's end-to-end, multi-INT , and multiplatform, Rapid Response Solutions to "hard" intelligence problems.

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(U) "I was there to educate users on NRO capabilities and identify collection and capability gaps that NRO can fill," she reported in a March 1, 2009 interview for the Space Sentinel after her return home to Fort Bragg. Her presence in theater, as well as that of the [redacted] NRO members that accompanied her, and the many other NRO persons deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq for extended durations, enhances NRO's relevance to the operational user through "point of need" presence.

~~(S//TK//REL)~~ Asked to provide her own definition of the work's intent, [redacted] related that NRO "Forward Support is being with our users in the field so that we, as NRO personnel, can see first-hand what issues they face and how their operations are run – to enable us to better meet their needs with products, services and capabilities." A trained physicist and experienced Intelligence Community veteran, she applied her knowledge of NRO technology and data to her liaison work on her deployment. "For my work in theater," she related, "I used a wide gamut of NRO technology and data types - [redacted]

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[redacted]

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(U) While in [redacted] the user insight she gained helped her and others shape the evolution of NRO systems operations and ground mission interfaces. "I helped the customers schedule NTM collection to test [redacted] devices," she said. "I helped arrange testing of ground and airborne collection and processing capabilities, coordinated production of [redacted] models for their targets, and educated them on new tools." By bringing an increased presence of ready technology more directly to the fight, she "also helped the users fill capability gaps and investigated new capabilities that did and will continue to help them prosecute their targets faster and more efficiently."

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~~(S//REL)~~ “As the NRO Senior Field ‘Rep’ [Redacted] “I facilitated the NRO team’s access to the right TF [Task Force] entities who could most fully take advantage of NRO tools and capabilities. I made sure the team was talking to the right units and the right personnel within those units to make the most significant impact on their operations.” This vital work was in pursuit of the leadership of a dynamic enemy who is often maneuvering within constantly adapting networks to avoid capture and destruction by Coalition forces.

**(U) The Passage of Time Expands the NRO Field Rep Mission**

(U) In discussing precedents to NRO’s current forward deployment initiative, [Redacted] explained, “The CENTCOM [United States Central Command] Team has been deploying on a regular basis since the beginning of the war – for the last several years – but the more formal program started in 2008.” She, herself, has “been involved with the [NRO forward presence] concept since Brigadier General Jeffrey C. Horne [the former NRO Deputy Director for Mission Support] first spoke to [Redacted] leadership about putting teams forward with them.”

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(U) She related that because NRO is not a Combat Support Agency, an evolution of circumstances led to routinely deploying NRO personnel into combat theaters. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Officer in Charge, saw a need for NRO Field Reps to be forward-deployed with their customers,” said [Redacted] along with Bridger General Horne, saw that as an opportunity for the Field Reps to get in ‘lock step’ with the users who were prosecuting the war. They realized that the more Field Reps know about what is going on at the front lines and what challenges the users face, the better they will be able to help them by making relevant suggestions for support that will make their jobs easier.”

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**(U) Joint and Interagency Teamwork Efforts**

~~(S//REL)~~ The NRO is not alone in providing frontline service to the military. “In most locations we are sitting side by side with our mission partners. That allows us to stay up to date on their endeavors, and they on ours.” Commenting on the level of cooperation between other theater organizations, [Redacted] reported, “the Field Rep cadre is a very tight-knit group, and we regularly lean on each other for support and information. Our collective experiences benefit all of us and we use that to our advantage on a regular basis. While deployed, we tour each other’s areas and share ideas to support each other’s users. Because of our varied backgrounds and networks, that helps us to stay up to speed on more efforts across the NRO.”

**(U) Personnel, Transportation, Logistics, and Training Considerations**

~~(S//REL)~~ As of August 20, 2009, NRO had [Redacted] assigned to the Ground Enterprise Directorate and an [Redacted] as Deputy Director for Mission Support assets. In the next two weeks, NRO scheduled [Redacted] more individuals to arrive at their destinations for a rotation, with [Redacted] slated to return home. The missions these individuals will perform include providing technical advice, [Redacted] support, engagements with theater representatives, routine hardware and software maintenance, systems upgrades, and assisting the various commands in a variety of areas.

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(U) The NRO Forward Presence initiative faces major logistical difficulties. “When traveling to war zones,” related [Redacted] “transportation and logistics is always a hardship. We’ve moved a lot of people and a lot of gear,

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especially in support of the various [redacted] initiatives. But we're figuring it out as we go and evaluating the different options along the way. NRO's buy-in into the [redacted] program has been particularly helpful on that front." Pre-deployment preparation is one key to success for those sent to combat theaters. To ready people for the dangers of a frontline placement, [redacted] reported, "The deployers take different training courses depending on who they're supporting, but, generally speaking, they have to be weapons qualified and have some OPSEC [Operations Security] and area familiarization training."

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### (U) Human Risk Management

(U) Combat theater duty obviously entails risk. Active insurgencies continue in Afghanistan and Iraq, with Iraq, in particular, remaining a hotbed of enemy activity. Though the Sunni Arab insurgency has weakened compared to its peak in 2006, overall terrorist attacks in Afghanistan have increased in number and lethality during the past two years. The threat from Al Qaida in Iraq (AQI) continues, though at lower levels than previously seen as local resistance groups reject AQI's presence and assist Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces battle them.

(U) While there is no indication that enemy forces are directly targeting NRO personnel, they remain at risk of collateral casualties in the event of an attack in a public area or against a U.S. installation. It is also possible to become a convenient target of opportunity. Bagram Air Field, an NRO team destination, and one to which [redacted] [redacted] deployed, has been a target of choice for Taliban operatives and other militants for some time.

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Insurgents have used rocket attacks, suicide bombers, IED s, and other methods against the base. Intelligence indicates that enemy forces are planning more attacks there, and at some Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), particularly in the eastern provinces bordering Pakistan. Statistically speaking, visitors are at just as high a risk for injury as those permanently stationed to these FOBs.

### (U) The NRO Forward Support Shape of Things to Come

~~S//TK//REL~~ With respect to the future of sending NRO individuals to support Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom [redacted] said, "we will be maintaining regular rotations with [redacted] in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as with [redacted] [redacted] and we are [redacted] with [the] [redacted] [redacted] Headquarters. We've [redacted] and will continue to do so," she said. "We now have reps at Bagram, and also have teams constantly coming in and out of theater, installing and working on the components of [redacted] [redacted]"

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(U) "We've been able to help our users in ways we would have never imagined had we tried to do this from home," contends [redacted] "NRO reps in the field get to sit face-to-face with them and observe their operations – see first-hand and understand the issues they have – which helps us apply an effective solution to a particular problem and form a better relationship. You just don't get the same insight into how they operate from a vantage point back in the CON US [Continental United States]." She also explained that "for the users, it [forward support] means they get a more accurate assessment of their requirements and also an education on what NRO really brings to the fight. Many 'customers' only know that NRO provides IMINT [Imagery Intelligence] and SIGINT [Signals Intelligence] data, and don't necessarily know about all of the data collection and processing and systems development that goes on."

(U) Summarizing the value of her in-theater experience, [redacted] reflected the successes of the NRO

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Forward Presence program she witnessed outweighed the risks, affirming with confidence the response of supported organizations and their members has been quite favorable. “They have been very amenable to it. When they see us out forward with them, they know we are committed to helping them. In fact, we’ve been asked by many of the leaders to maintain our presence forward so that we can continue providing this level of support – and even more....”

(U) [redacted] is the Corporate Communicator for the NRO Deputy Director for Mission Support (DDMS).

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Posted in 2009, sentinel, summer | Tagged [redacted] Comment

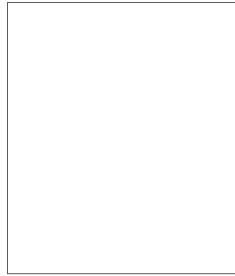
**(U) [redacted] – NRO Senior Field Representative to JSOC**

Posted on November 30, 2009 by [redacted]

~~SECRET//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

(U) Parent Organization: United States Air Force (civilian employee)

(U) Biographical Summary: [redacted] technical and operational career has focused on geospatial endeavors. A former member of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), she earned a degree in physics, and then worked the first five years as an Image Scientist with the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (an NGA predecessor) performing special collections and radiometry. Subsequently, she performed duties as a Technical Operations Officer in another agency of the National Intelligence Community for a couple of years before returning to NGA as a Geospatial Analyst and moving to the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in 2002—a location where she has served ever since. In June 2006, however, she transferred to the NRO and became a Senior Field Representative to the JSOC.



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~~(S//REL)~~ What Organizations Served In While In Theater: [redacted] [redacted] supports Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan), [redacted]

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(U) Recent Recognition: [redacted] was selected as the [redacted] January-March 2007 and October-December 2008 Senior Civilian Employee of the Quarter, as well as that directorate’s 2007 and 2008 Senior Civilian Employee of the Year. She also received the [redacted] Centurion Award for October-December 2008, a distinction recognizing the [redacted] member that has done the most for support of the Warfighter during that period.

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*See also – In Harms Way: An NRO Senior Civilian’s Recent Tour in the Combat Zones*

Posted in 2009, sentinel, summer | Tagged [redacted] Leave a comment

**(U) NGW Geolocation Scenario**

Posted on November 30, 2009 by [redacted]

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~~SECRET//SI//TK//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

~~(S//SI//TK//REL)~~ On May 21, 2009, Mahmud Muhammad Khalid 'Ali, a terrorist linked to suicide operations near Mosul and the deaths of Coalition and Iraqi personnel, was captured in Basrah, Iraq.

[Redacted]

~~(S//SI//REL)~~ Although the May 21st operation is real, a fictional scenario demonstrates the full range of similar ground and overhead capabilities that the NRO, in collaboration with other defense and intelligence community

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

~~(S//SI//REL)~~ In the end, the terrorist is found due to the [Redacted] accesses/techniques and analysts spanning multiple agencies and the DoD.

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(U) [Redacted] is a Systems Engineer in the NRO Systems Engineering, [Redacted]

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(U) See main article: [Keeping Up with the iPhone and other Next Generation Wireless Devices](#)

Posted in [2009](#), [sentinel](#), [summer](#) | Tagged [Redacted]

**(U) Keeping Up with the iPhone and other Next Generation Wireless Devices**

Posted on [November 30, 2009](#) by [Redacted]

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~~SECRET//SI//TK//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

By [Redacted]

~~(S//REL)~~ It is not just [President Barack H. Obama](#); people worldwide, including those who want to harm America, are using Next Generation Wireless (NGW ) devices, like the [iPhone](#). The [Intelligence Community](#)

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**Vigilance From Above**  
National Reconnaissance Office

**(U) Diversity as a Source of Tremendous Strength**

Posted on November 25, 2009 by

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~~SECRET//REL TO USA, FVEY~~

(U) Since the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) draws its workforce from the Intelligence Community, Department of Defense (DoD) , and numerous other agencies, we are an inherently diverse organization. While some focus on the challenges of uniting people with varied backgrounds, I see diversity as a source of tremendous strength and key to collaboration.

 Bruce Carlson, Director, National Reconnaissance Office

(U) In my experience, working alongside men and women from other agencies and services provides insight into their cultures and ultimately allows you to leverage unique strengths, and foster an atmosphere of teamwork and cooperation. When the NRO was created in the 1960s, decades before fused intelligence and interagency collaboration became popular phrases, the NRO quietly applied the combined expertise of the Intelligence Community, DoD, and industry to meet the nation's most difficult challenges.

Bruce Carlson, Director, National Reconnaissance Office

(U) Those partnerships pioneered fifty years ago have expanded to meet new demands necessary to keep America safe, secure and free. Current operations depend on NRO and Air Force space platforms, and we have a duty to maintain those capabilities.

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(U) This Space Sentinel edition presents information on Air Force and NRO cooperation, their shared heritage, and common mission. Through this partnership, we provide a model for collaboration that directly produces capabilities those in harm's way use. Never forget they are the reason why we ensure *Vigilance from Above*.

Internal NRO Hosting of this article

Posted in 2009, dnro, sentinel, summer | Tagged  diversity, partnership | 4 Comments

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