The release of the new strategic guidance for the Department of Defense requires an analysis of its effects on the Air Defense Artillery (ADA) branch. It gives us a good opportunity to ‘see ourselves’ in light of the new strategy and assess where we are from a mission and programmatic standpoint. In turn, we need to use this assessment to drive the ADA branch strategy, inform the decision making of senior leadership, and educate the ADA force as to the “So What?” -- explaining their role in strategy implementation.

I wanted to share my thoughts on the opportunities the new strategy provides our ADA branch. In many forms, the strategy identifies roles and missions the Air Defense branch is already performing. The familiar phrase, ‘words have meaning,’ is even more predominant when one considers the specified tasks laid out in the new strategy, and how they impact the ADA branch.

The opening messages from the president

The president’s and secretary of defense’s messages touch on key themes that apply directly to our air and missile defense mission, particularly with respect to forward-stationing/deployments to the Asia-Pacific and Middle East regions and future programs.

The president states, “...we are supporting political and economic reform and deepening partnerships to ensure regional security...we are joining with allies and partners around the world to build their capacity to promote security...”

As an air defense force, these words resonate with what our formations do on a routine basis. Today we see units engaged daily with host nations in Korea, Japan, Israel, Germany, Poland, Turkey, Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates in a direct effort to carry-out the president’s expectations. We partner with each of these nations, bilaterally and multi-laterally, to build partnership capacity, conduct integrated joint and coalition exercises, and foster strong ties to their senior civilian and military leadership.

The president’s message continues, “In particular, we will continue to invest in the capabilities critical to future success, including...countering weapons of mass destruction; operating in anti-access environments...”

Programmatic decisions affecting the air and missile defense capabilities must fall in line with this investment strategy in order to ensure “future success” against future threats, to include ballistic missile delivered weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This includes investments in global missile defense (GMD) capabilities, terminal high altitude air defense (THAAD) and Patriot.

We must also ensure the Air and Missile Defense
branch enables maneuver operations in anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) environments through lethal, agile, and mobile air defense capabilities, such as our indirect fire protection capability (IFPC). The linchpin to integrate these capabilities is the Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Battlefield Control System (IBCS), which uses an open architecture, any sensor/any shooter methodology to integrate Army, joint and coalition air and missile defense capabilities against the current and future array of aerial threats.

The secretary of defense's message emphasizes the role of global presence -- across the Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and European regions -- along with a smaller, leaner force that is technologically advanced.

He states, “It (the joint force) will have global presence emphasizing the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East while still ensuring our ability to maintain our defense commitments to Europe, and strengthening alliances and partnerships across all regions.”

Again, we look at the role of our forward-stationed and deployed air defense forces in Korea/Japan, throughout the Gulf, and in Europe, and see that they are executing precisely as the strategy calls for.

Whether it is a single Patriot battery in Poland, remote air and missile defense sites in Japan, Turkey, and Israel, or our battalions in Korea, Japan, and the Middle East, we see that our already “smaller, leaner force” truly has “global presence.”

The secretary adds, “It will preserve our ability to conduct the missions we judge most important to protecting core national interests...deterring and defeating aggression by adversaries, including those seeking to deny our power projection, countering weapons of mass destruction...and protecting the homeland.”

The Soldiers of the 263rd AAMDC stand watch over the national capital region (NCR), 24/7, providing homeland air defense protection of our nation’s capital. They also fulfill the responsibilities associated with protection during national special security events (NSSE’s) through the employment of the Deployable Integrated Air and Missile Defense System (D-IAMDS).

And note -- each time a Patriot battalion completes its rotation in the Middle East and no Iranian ballistic missiles have been launched at our Gulf partners that battalion has executed a successful deterrence mission. The same can be said for our forces in Korea and Japan.

As many of our forward-stationed and deployed Patriot batteries provide critical asset defense of aerial ports of debarkation (APOD) and sea ports of debarkation (SPOD) -- both key to power projection -- we see the importance of air and missile defense in fulfilling the secretary’s requirement.

PFC Trevor Gaston, from 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery, demonstrates an FIM-92 Stinger Man-Portable Air-Defense System at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington D.C. Air Defense units from South Carolina and Ohio have been on rotating deployments to the national capital region to support homeland defense as part of Operation Noble Eagle. This continued operation began in 2001, just days after and in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. (Photo by SPC Darron Salzer, U.S. Army)

Strategic guidance document: Asia-Pacific

The new strategy places emphasis on the Asian-Pacific region. “Accordingly, while the U.S. military will continue to contribute to security globally, we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.”

The strategy adds, “The United States will continue to make the necessary investments to ensure that we maintain regional access and the ability to operate freely in keeping with our treaty obligations and with international law” while detailing the importance of the mission in Korea by stating, “…we will maintain peace on the Korean peninsula by effectively working with allies and other regional states to deter and defend against provocation from North Korea.”

Air and missile defense plays a critical role from the tactical/theater to the strategic/global areas of responsibility and remain highly leveraged in the Asia-Pacific region. The headquarters of both the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command (AAMDC) and the 35th Air Defense Artillery Brigade routinely engage with our allies in Korea and Japan.

The 94th AAMDC is partnered with the 13th Air Force through its operational control relationship. This ensures the Combined Force Air Component Commander (CFACC) has the full range of air and missile defense capabilities available to employ interdependently with other joint assets. Patriot units in Korea and Japan work continuously with their joint and allied partners to
provide regional deterrence, while the TPY-2 Radar in Shariki, Japan provides capability to both the regional and global missile defense missions.

The strategy mandates, "...that we maintain regional access and the ability to operate freely..."

The Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC) discusses opposed operational access and states, “The essential problem for future joint forces is to be able to project military force into an operational area and sustain it in the face of armed opposition...”. As anti-access/area denial (A2AD) presents this military problem in the face of the strategy mandate of maintaining access and freedom to operate, we see a key role air and missile defense will play.

For instance, area denial efforts by an adversary will require a rapidly deployable, agile, and lethal system that provides C-RAM and UAS defense for our expeditionary forces operating in an austere environment. In order to best understand, define, and articulate the air and missile defense role, we have commissioned a study that will look at our concepts of employment consistent with the emerging concepts of joint operational access, A2AD, and airsea battle.

While much of the joint operational access and A2AD discussion centers on the Asia-Pacific region, we will look across all regions. This study will help us identify planning assumptions and what needs to be done to challenges. Its outcomes will be briefed this spring and will be a major part of our discussions during this year’s Fires seminar.

Middle East

Though the military is drawing down in the Middle East, the strategy still places great significance on the region’s security:

“Our defense efforts in the Middle East will be aimed at countering violent extremists and destabilizing threats, as well as upholding our commitment to allies and partner states. Of particular concern is the United States will do this while standing up for Israel’s security and a comprehensive Middle East peace, including the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction (WMD). U.S. policy will emphasize Gulf security, in collaboration with Gulf Cooperation Council countries when appropriate, to prevent Iran’s development of a nuclear weapon capability and counter its destabilizing policies. In support these objectives, the United States will continue to place a premium on U.S. and allied military presence in – and support of – partner nations in and around this region.”

Deployment of U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery battalions and a brigade headquarters throughout the Gulf region shows the United States’ enduring military commitment to the security of the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries. The air defense units are well integrated with both the joint and allied architectures. Bilateral and multi-lateral partnerships, formalized through our work at the CENTCOM Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) Center in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, allow U.S. and Gulf Region partners to exercise frequently through regional exercises such as Falcon Shield, Unified Protector, Eagle Resolve, and GCC Air and Missile Defense Exercises (GCC AMDEX’s).

Though the IAMD Center, Air Defense Liaison Teams (ADLTs) are incorporated into the Air Operations Centers (AOCs) of our Gulf partners, providing air picture and situational awareness, as well as training and exercising ADA tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). The deployed brigade and battalions contribute significantly to these exercises, working closely with their allied partners and forming relationships very similar to those the air defense community experienced with the Germans and Dutch during the Cold War years in Central Europe. In short, the Army’s Air and Missile Defenders are ‘on-point’ in this region and continue to fulfill the Middle East requirements as stated in the defense strategy.

The joint relationships within CENTCOM between the deployed AMD forces, Air Force Central Command (AFCENT), and Navy Central Command (NAVCENT) have never been stronger. Planning and coordination for exercises and real-world operations encompass the full range of staff actions.

Defense design, ROE, identification and engagement criteria, unit positioning, radar resourcing and cueing, pre-planned responses, and AMDEX’s, are only a few examples where the AAMDC, AMD brigade, AFCENT and NAVCENT commands and staffs synchronize operations.

Europe

The strategy discusses the rebalancing of forces within Europe: “Combined with the drawdown in Iraq and Afghanistan, this has created a strategic opportunity to rebalance the U.S. military. Investment in Europe, moving from a focus on current conflicts toward a focus on future capabilities. In keeping with this evolving strategic landscape, our posture in Europe must also evolve.” I remain optimistic that the air defense forces in Europe will not be ‘rebalanced.’ With the inclusion of strategic radar sites in Israel and Turkey, continuing
Patriot-to-Poland battery rotations, and execution of European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) through THAAD battery deployments, we see how air and missile defense forces are already moving toward the “focus on future capabilities.”

**Partnerships**

Though we have discussed the specific partnerships developed throughout the Asian-Pacific, Middle Eastern, and European regions, it is important to read the strategy’s summation on building partnership capacity:

Building partnership capacity elsewhere in the world also remains important for sharing the costs and responsibilities of global leadership. Across the globe we will seek to be the security partner of choice, pursuing new partnerships with a growing number of nations... whose interests and viewpoints are merging into a common vision of freedom, stability, and prosperity. Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.

Again, we see air and missile defense forces directly involved in building partnership capacity, conducting their missions precisely in line with the specific language from the strategy. Nowhere is this more prevalent than the work we are doing with partners in Europe and the Middle East. Though the MEADS program has been terminated, we still have an extremely strong partnership with the German air defense forces. This is evidenced by the recent decision by the German Defense Ministry to relocate the German Air Defense School from Fort Bliss, Texas, to Fort Sill, Okla., continuing our long-standing relationship and allowing us to cooperate on all aspects of air and missile defense, from combat developments to instructors in the ADA school.

More recent examples where we have begun to build partnership capacity are with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait, both of whom have purchased billions of dollars in Patriot and terminal high altitude air defense (THAAD) systems. The UAE Air Defense students receive their institutional training at Fort Sill. Recently, six 94S (radar maintainers) graduated from their radar training course.

In late March, we will see the consolidated graduation of 14E, 140E, and 14T students who will comprise the first-ever UAE Patriot PAC-3 battery.

Additionally, UAE hosts the aforementioned Center for Integrated Air and Missile Defense (CIAMD). CIAMD, manned and supported by CENTCOM, ARCENT, and AFCENT, provides all GCC countries with the opportunity for air and missile defense professionals to...
meet, discuss, and exercise important regional air and missile defense principles, concepts, and procedures using academics, planning and simulation.

In Kuwait, deployed U.S. Patriot forces routinely conduct fully integrated training with Kuwaiti Patriot units. Command and control, communications, and air battle functions are shared at the battalion level during ongoing air defense operations. This included augmenting the Kuwaiti air defenses during the first-ever Patriot missile live-fire held at the Udari Range in Kuwait.

Primary missions of the U.S. armed forces.

The strategy provides a section titled, “deter and defeat aggression.” It states: “U.S. forces will be capable of deterring and defeating aggression by any potential adversary. Credible deterrence results from both the capabilities to deny an aggressor the prospect of achieving his objectives and from the complementary capability to impose unacceptable costs on the aggressor. U.S. forces will plan to operate whenever possible with allied and coalition forces.”

Our air and missile defense forces, as an element in the Fires warfighting function, lead regional and global deterrence missions against potential missile attacks from Iran and North Korea.

It is important to note that the mission statements of these units are twofold: “…to deter air and missile attack, and if deterrence fails, defeat…”.

We combine our defensive Fires “capabilities to deny an aggressor the prospect of achieving his objectives” with our offensive Fires brethren’s “complementary capability to impose unacceptable costs on the aggressor” in a direct application of the Fires warfighting function toward meeting this strategy.

As mentioned previously, successful deterrence occurs each day our GMD, NCR, and Patriot forces maintain 24/7 watch in the homeland, CENTCOM, PACOM, and EUCOM.

Project power despite anti-access/area denial challenges.

This section of the strategy details the importance of the air and missile defense force. It specifically lists ballistic and cruise missile use by our adversaries and follows with the requirement to invest in improving our missile defenses. The strategy reads:

“In order to credibly deter potential adversaries and to prevent them from achieving their objectives, the United States must maintain its ability to project power in areas in which our access and freedom to operate are challenged. In these areas, sophisticated adversaries will use asymmetric capabilities, to include electronic and cyber warfare, ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced air defenses, mining, and other methods, to complicate our operational calculus. States such as China and Iran will continue to pursue asymmetric means to counter our power projection capabilities, while the proliferation of sophisticated weapons and technology will extend to non-state actors as well.

Accordingly, the U.S. military will invest as required to ensure its ability to operate effectively in anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environments. This will include implementing the Joint Operational Access Concept, sustaining our undersea capabilities, developing a new stealth bomber, improving missile defenses, and continuing efforts to enhance the resiliency and effectiveness of critical space-based capabilities.”

As this section is titled “Primary Missions of the U.S. Armed Forces,” it is important to note the strategy calls for investment in missile defenses as part of the “Project Power Despite Anti-Access/Area Denial Challenges” sub-section. Since this is a primary mission listed within the strategy, it follows that air and missile defense be understood as an Army core capability.

While we leverage all available joint interdependencies in order to conduct missile defense, in many strategic and operational instances, the Army’s air and missile defense force may be the only capability available to combatant commanders.

Defend the homeland, provide support to civil authorities.

The defense strategy states, “U.S. forces will continue to defend U.S. territory from direct attack by state and non-state actors.” It adds, “Homeland defense and support to civil authorities require strong, steady–state force readiness, to include a robust missile defense capability.”

Whether it is manning the system interceptor silos with the 49th Missile Defense Battalion at Fort Greely, Alaska, or maintaining vigilant surveillance over the national capital region, the air and missile defense Soldiers of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade and 263rd AAMDC stand watch 24/7. Their critical missions are linked directly to the strategy’s directive for defense of the homeland. We must not lose sight of the other mission of the 263rd AAMDC, which is to provide air defense during national special security events (NSSEs). Though low-profile, the NSSE air defense missions provide strategic-level protection of specific activities within the homeland, and are executed within the Deployable – Integrated Air and Missile Defense (D-IAMDS) concept.
Provide a stabilizing presence.

This section of the strategy relates to the discussion on building partnership capacity with our allied and coalition partners. It says: “U.S. forces will conduct a sustainable pace of presence operations abroad, including rotational deployments and bilateral and multilateral training exercises. These activities reinforce deterrence, help build the capacity and competence of U.S., allied, and partner forces for internal and external defense, strengthen alliance cohesion, and increase U.S. influence. A reduction in resources will require innovative and creative solutions to maintain our support for allied and partner interoperability and building partner capacity. However, with reduced resources, thoughtful choices will need to be made regarding the location and frequency of these operations.”

Noted previously, our air and missile defense units carry-out the strategy’s intent, sometimes with as little as an 80-Soldier battery throughout an entire country such as is done with our Patriot-to-Poland rotations, or two batteries stationed per GCC country. The unit commanders and Soldiers work closely with the host nation air defense forces in training exercises, professional development, and cultural exchanges, to name a few. It is done with a relatively small footprint, and when compared to the outcomes which the strategy seeks — deterrence, help build the capacity and competence of U.S., allied, and partner forces for internal and external defense, strengthen alliance cohesion, and increase U.S. influence — we see a tremendous benefit gained.

The intent of this article is to give a perspective on how ‘we see ourselves’ with respect to fulfilling the new defense strategy. The air and missile defense forces are already meeting the tenets of the defense strategy on many levels — strategic-operational-tactical; at each echelon — global-regional-homeland-theater; with multi-COMPO forces both home and abroad — national capital region and GMD; and in all regions of interest — Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and Europe.

Though there are many great things being done now within our air and missile defense forces in consonance within the context of the new defense strategy, we cannot lose sight of what the defense strategy means for our future.

The requirements for increased investment in air and missile defense capability will only increase. Future UAS and cruise missile threats will challenge us to protect our maneuver formations. We must recognize the global deployments in support of the TPY-2 radar missions that 47 percent of our Patriot force is either forward-stationed or deployed, the 24/7 mission of our National Guard forces in support of NSSE’s and the NCR, and upcoming deployments of THAAD in support of all COCOMs will continue to challenge our formations.

We must ensure that across the DOTMLPF we are resourced to meet these challenges, that our training base is adequately prepared to educate our Soldiers on these diverse and dynamic missions, and that we continue our coordination across all stakeholders — JFCC-IMD, SMDC, FCoE, AAMDCs, among joint and coalition partners, and within the Air Defense branch.