



AOC POST-EVENT REPORT

AOC Discussions | EMSO Leadership

General John E. Hyten

On January 6, AOC hosted its inaugural AOC Discussions event on EMSO Leadership with General John E. Hyten, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Hyten has long been a strong voice for the Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations (EMSO) community. As the nation's second highest ranking military official, he is also the Senior Designated Official (SDO) for EMSO, a responsibility bestowed upon this office from the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This act also created the EMSO Cross Functional Team (CFT) under the leadership of the SDO.

The EMSO CFT recently released a important, new Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority Strategy (EMSSS) that focuses on the imperative of "Freedom of action" in the EMS as a necessary precursor to the successful conduct of operations across all domains. For further information on this topic, you can [download a copy of the EMSSS](#) and the related [AOC Advocacy Issue Brief](#).

General Hyten opened his remarks with an honest assessment looking back over the past decade; he expected DOD to be further along the path of reform than they are today. As DOD navigates the challenges of Great Power Competition, he pointed out that many of the gaps associated with EMSO today have long been apparent. The joint force and military services had not embraced and accelerated reform as was necessary. Today, the tide is turning. DOD is making progress, and its understanding and appreciation for EMSO is growing. For reform to continue and be successful, progress must be made in three areas: joint force, military services, and industry.

To help reinvigorate EMSO throughout the joint force, General Hyten drew attention to the fact that Congress has more regularly inserted itself into the reform effort. Congressional intervention is indicative of reform initiatives across DOD moving too slowly and inefficiently. He specifically addressed a new legislative provision, Section 152, in the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which became law this week following the congressional override of a presidential veto. Section 152 orders the transfer of responsibilities and functions relating to EMSO from US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) to an appropriate entity within DoD. The agreed upon provision provides a two-year window and requires the Service Chiefs to evaluate the Armed Forces' capability to perform EMSO. This provision will make for an important development in 2021, especially as the EMSO CFT embarks on the Implementation Plan and Roadmap to its recently released EMSSS.

The first step to implementing Section 152, according to General Hyten, is to make USSTRATCOM “whole” again in its role as the current lead on EMSO. This is a subtle but essential goal. Whichever entity is ultimately responsible for EMSO within DOD will adopt and continue the conditions of EMSO as they are within USSTRATCOM. In a bureaucracy, too often, the transfer of ownership is met with near-term efforts to divest in responsibility and resourcing until the transfer is complete. Thus, merely transferring EMSO responsibilities to a new entity will not fix anything. EMSO must be healthy within USSTRATCOM before a transfer can be successfully executed. Today, the EMSO mission under USSTRATCOM is understaffed, under resourced, and its organization is not aligned correctly. Regardless of the future “home” for the EMSO mission, the initial implementation of the EMSSS over the next two years will be the responsibility of USSTRATCOM, so we must start now to address these persistent gaps.

Next, General Hyten specifically addressed the EMSSS. He highlighted the five (5) strategic goals of the EMSSS below. He noted that while the Joint Force is receiving much of

EMS Superiority Strategy Goals

1. Develop Superior Capabilities
2. Evolve to an Agile, Fully Integrated EMS Infrastructure
3. Pursue Total Force EMS Readiness
4. Secure Enduring Partnerships for EMS Advantage
5. Establish Effective EMS Governance

the attention on reform today, the strategic objectives of the EMSSS bear out the predominant role that the military services must play in achieving EMS Superiority. General Hyten briefly discussed the recent but long overdue progress within each service, including the US Air Force establishing a new Spectrum Warfare Wing; the Space Force designating its Space Delta 3 (equivalent to a USAF Wing) for the Space EW mission; the Army initiating the first phase of its program to deliver to its brigades the Terrestrial Layer Systems, an integrated SIGINT/EW/Cyber capability; and the Navy developing and successfully flight testing the Next Generation Jammer (Mid-Band). These new capabilities are essential, and it is the Joint Force’s

responsibility to integrate them into the battle across all warfighting domains. Therefore, EMSO capabilities, infrastructure, and training are improving, but work needs to continue.

General Hyten then discussed how to lead the reform moving forward; starting with embracing the evolution of the debate surrounding EMS as a warfighting domain. He expressed that EMS is not its own domain (the EMSSS declares the EMS a “maneuver space”) because, simply put, you cannot fight a single domain and be effective on the battlefield. EMSO must be fought and won effectively in the Joint Force construct and by every Domain component of the Joint Force. The EMS is the first critical element in all domain operations. Therefore, DOD is building a new Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC) that is “critically enabled” by EMSO. The JWC will be supported by four (4) concepts, including global fires, Joint All Domain Command and Control, contested logistics, and information advantage. The Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), which General Hyten also chairs as the VCJCS, will be taking a new role in

defining these concepts. He highlighted that the JROC would be announcing in late-Spring 2021 new joint requirements for each of the above JWC supporting concepts and taking steps to hold each of the military services accountable for meeting the requirements.

Of the JWC concepts, General Hyten focused on information advantage through which the joint force can and must achieve EMS Superiority. The JWC on information advantage will address data, software, and EMS-related components and define the broad based standards and structures that apply to each of the military services to build their capabilities and bring them together in the Joint fight. The JROC will release a memo later this month that will include initial capabilities descriptions and trigger a four-month window to build out the official requirements. This is arguably the most ambitious development and one that, according to General Hyten, has never been done before. In the end, the efforts of General Hyten and his office reflect the imperative for bringing together unique service capabilities, resource test and training infrastructure, improve readiness, and build a skilled EMSO workforce.

In closing, over the next two years, the EMSO CFT will work tirelessly to implement the EMSSS and fix the problems at hand. Before that happens, which will likely flow over into the term of the next VCJCS, our community needs to remain engaged and pursue answers to questions that remain across DOTMLPF-P.

Questions for the Way Ahead

1. Where is the best “home” for EMSO within the operational community? With organizations such as the Joint Electromagnetic Warfare Center (JEWEC) and the Joint Electromagnetic Preparedness for Advanced Combat (JEPAC), US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) is currently the leading center of EMSO expertise and operational support within the DOD. Will USSTRATCOM remain that the best place to unify EMS capabilities and workforce going forward? Should EMSO fall under CJCS as a CCA, or other COCOM or Unified Command?
2. How do we develop, staff, and train JEMSOCs across the COCOMs to provide operational and technical “reach back” for our warfighters?
3. How do the COCOMs coordinate with the military services to conduct electromagnetic battle management (EMBM) at the joint level? How do the COCOMS establish a pipeline of expertise and enforce training standards for EMBM?
4. NATO has also been pursuing investments in EW. It has also developed its own EMS Strategy and is in the process of reviewing NATO EW policy and doctrine. The EMSSS strategic goals emphasize partnerships for EMS advantage. How can the DOD work closely with its NATO allies to bring these strategies together and align investments to improve interoperability, training, and leadership? How do we make necessary reforms to ITAR and other trade regulations to ensure there is limited divergence in policy toward the development and support of military technology, including test equipment?
5. To achieve progress in developing advanced EW capabilities within the services, how is the Joint Staff and EMSO CFT working with Industry to focus and synchronize the requirements across all warfighting domains?