

Pacific Missile Defense Command gets new leader

MAJ. RICHARD STEBBINS

94th AAMDC Public Affairs

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii – The Army command responsible for first-line defense against air and missile attacks in the Asia-Pacific Theater has a new commander.

Brig. Gen. Roger F. Mathews officially assumed command of the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command July 18 in a ceremony here.

The new commander takes over from Brig. Gen. John E. Seward, who commanded the unit since its activation in October 2005.

Mathews last served as deputy commanding general for operations, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colo.

"I look forward to the challenges of command and pledge to you my total dedication as we continue to strive to make this command the best it can be," said Mathews.

The 94th AAMDC provides command and control for all theater-based air and missile defense assets, including those from other services. The command is the third of its kind in the department of defense, with two in the active component and one in the reserve component; however, it is the sole command assigned to a specific theater. The establishment of this type of unit, dedicated to the Pacific region, emphasizes the importance of ballistic missile defense to national security.

"This is a great command with an outstanding reputation for protecting our nation," said Mathews. "You set the standard for excellence, whether it is in protecting U.S. forces and allies in the Pacific or ... expanding the mission of theater and global missile defense. Your performance is, and has been, magnificent."

Lt. Gen. John M. Brown III, U.S. Army, Pacific commanding general and reviewing officer for the ceremony, praised Seward for all the hard work in establishing the command and its great reputation.

"Brigadier General John Seward is a true visionary," said Brown. "He has met our nation's evolving security requirements and has orchestrated tactics and procedures to improve air defense from a regional and global perspective. General Seward's outstanding achievements leave a legacy that will serve the Army and the Pacific theater for years to come."

Since its activation, the unit has many major accomplishments to its credit. In just the first year, the 94th AAMDC far exceeded Army expectations by meeting all requirements to achieve fully operational capable status, Seward said.

During the past two years, the unit has operated at a break-neck pace, participating in more than 25 major exercises and thereby building close relationships with both U.S. and foreign military partners. Working with other services and Asia-Pacific countries such



KEVIN P. DOWNEY

Brig. Gen. Roger F. Mathews, right, accepts the 94th Army Air Missile Defense Command colors from U.S. Army, Pacific Commanding General Lt. Gen. John M. Brown III, marking his assumption of command in a ceremony on Palm Circle here July 18.

as Japan, South Korea and Australia has helped bolster national missile defense and increase positive relations with collaborating nations, said Seward.

Additionally, the unit expanded its footprint by establishing the first Forward Based X-Band Transportable radar system in Japan and re-stationing the 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery Regiment from Fort Bliss to Okinawa.

The powerful FBX-T radar provides precise tracking information of potential ballistic missile threats against the U.S. mainland, deployed forces or allied

countries. The 1-1 ADA, with its state-of-the-art Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles, provides a reliable defense asset and deterrent to the region.

"This organization has accomplished a great number of things that you can be proud of in such a short period of time," said Seward. "You have helped build invaluable relationships with Pacific Rim nations ... that will play a major role in maintaining peace and security for the region in the years to come. The standard you have set has become the envy of all other organizations."

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