



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

COLONEL RYAN C. LAUGHTON

Col Ryan C. Laughton is currently the Commander, US Space Forces – Japan at Yokota Air Base, Japan. In this role, he leads a cadre of selectively-manned Guardians as a United States Space Force (USSF) service component under US Space Forces Indo-Pacific and assigned to the U.S. Forces Japan sub-unified command. USSF service components integrate at the component level and provide unified and sub-unified combatant commanders a subordinate space commander, organic space planning and employment expertise, and space command and control that is focused on the joint force's operational warfighting priorities and requirements. Additionally, the US Space Forces – Japan cadre works with our allies and partners to integrate space activities into shared operations, activities, and investments in the Japanese Area of Responsibility.

Col Laughton graduated from Wichita State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Aerospace Engineering and was subsequently selected for the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program working in a small, rural Japanese community as the resident English teacher. Upon his return to the United States, he attended Officer Training School and commissioned as a second lieutenant. He has served in a variety of positions within space launch, space operations, space acquisitions, space staff and the joint environment including engineer, instructor, executive officer, flight commander, satellite vehicle manager, operations analyst, branch chief and materiel leader. Born and raised in Wyoming, Col Laughton enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife, Amber, and two children, Taye and Westley.



EDUCATION

- 1999 Bachelor of Science, Aerospace Engineering, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kan.
- 2001 Japan Exchange and Teaching Program, Gunma Prefecture, Japan
- 2003 Officer Training School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2004 Air and Space Basic Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2009 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2010 Education with Industry – United Launch Alliance, Vandenberg SFB, Calif.
- 2011 Master of Aeronautical Science, Airport Operations, Embry-Riddle Worldwide, Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 2017 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2018 Joint Forces Staff College, Naval Station Norfolk, Va.
- 2020 Air War College by correspondence, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 2024 Commander of Space Forces Course, Peterson SFB, Colo.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Aug 2003 - Aug 2006, Wind Tunnel Test Engineer & Technology Assessment Program Deputy, Air Vehicles Directorate, Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio
2. Aug 2006 - Aug 2009, Payload Engineer, Executive Officer, & Mission Support Flight Commander, 4th Space Operations Squadron, Schriever SFB, Colo.
3. Aug 2009 - Jul 2010, Spacelift Education and Crossover Program (SLEC-P) Student, Education With Industry - United Launch Alliance, Vandenberg SFB, Calif.





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UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

4. Jul 2010 - Oct 2013, Delta IV Engineering Section Chief & Delta IV Flight Commander, 4th Space Launch Squadron, Vandenberg SFB, Calif.
5. Oct 2013 - Jul 2016, Next-Generation SIGINT Systems Project Manager & Satellite Vehicle Manager, Space Systems Program Office, National Reconnaissance Office, Chantilly, Va.
6. Jul 2016 - Jun 2017, Air Command and Staff College Student, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
7. Jun 2017 - Jun 2019, C4/Protection Operations Analyst & Requirements Integration Branch Chief, J8, Headquarters United States Africa Command, Stuttgart, Germany
8. Jun 2019 - Jun 2022, SBIRS GEO-5/6 Materiel Leader, Production Corps, Space Systems Command, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
9. Jun 2022 - Jun 2023, Senior Executive Officer, Space Systems Command, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
10. Jun 2023 - Feb 2024, Space Superiority Deputy Branch Chief, HQ Space Force, Pentagon, Va.
11. Feb 2024 - Jul 2024, Space Mission Enhancement Branch Chief, HQ Space Force, Pentagon, Va.
12. Jul 2024 - Present, Commander, US Space Forces – Japan (Provisional, Yokota Air Base, Japan

DECORATIONS

Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Joint Service Commendation Medal

Air and Space Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster

Air and Space Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant	8 August 2003
First Lieutenant	8 August 2005
Captain	8 August 2007
Major	1 November 2013
Lieutenant Colonel	1 July 2018
Colonel	1 July 2024

(Current as of January 2025)

