

Germany launches 'space command' to protect infrastructure

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The German military on Tuesday launched a "space command" tasked with overseeing satellites, watching for dangerous space junk and analyzing other countries' activities.

Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer launched the new operation during a visit to its base at Uedem in western Germany.

The military is "responding to the increasing significance of [space](#) for our state's ability to function, the prosperity of our population and the increasing dependency of the armed forces on space-supported data, services and products," Kramp-Karrenbauer's ministry said in a statement.

The aim is to bring together existing capabilities in one place, where the military's center for air operations is already based, and add new ones.

Kramp-Karrenbauer said that the term "Weltraumkommando," or "[space command](#)," might draw far-fetched associations with the novels of Jules Verne or starship Enterprise, but the reality is "far from being so sensational," news agency dpa reported.

The German military, or Bundeswehr, itself has six satellites in orbit. The minister said space operations for Germany "are always defensive operations"—for example to ensure that infrastructure isn't endangered.

The United States already has a Space Command, whose role is to conduct operations such as enabling satellite-based navigation and troop communication and providing warning of missile launches.

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