



Press Release Cyber Force – NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE until August 4, 2025 at 7:00 am.

CSIS Launches Commission on Cyber Force Generation

The Commission, in partnership with the Cyber Solarium Commission 2.0, will provide recommendations on how to organize a new military service that would ensure and defend the United States's strategic superiority and security in the cyber domain.

WASHINGTON, DC – August 4, 2025 – The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), in partnership with the Cyber Solarium Commission 2.0 (CSC 2.0) project at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), today launched the Commission on Cyber Force Generation.

Given the well-documented shortcomings in current force generation and readiness models to organize, train, and equip for military cyber operations, momentum is building for a dedicated Cyber Force. In response, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 directed the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to assess whether cyberspace requires an independent military service.

This Commission serves a distinct and essential role: it is not litigating the decision to create a Cyber Force but instead addressing the critical—and often overlooked—questions of implementation. Without this focused effort, any decision risks years of delay due to the well-known barriers to institutional change. The Commission will concentrate on the foundational details: the organizational structure, core functions, roles and responsibilities, and necessary authorities of a Cyber Force. By outlining these issues in advance, this effort seeks to accelerate execution, reduce transition risk, and ensure that policy decisions are translated into operational advantage.

The Commission, organized by CSIS's Strategic Technologies Program, will prepare a report with policy recommendations for the administration. The Commission will convene a variety of stakeholders, including current and former government officials, independent experts, industry, and civil society, to gather input as it develops these recommendations. The Commission will also engage the broader policy community and the public by releasing updates on its work. The Commission will formally launch on September 16, 2025, at CSIS, and will feature discussions with policymakers and leading experts.



“We are honored to convene this esteemed group of stakeholders to address the pressing issue of military readiness in the cyber domain. We look forward to working with the commissioners to develop a detailed set of policy recommendations for implementing a Cyber Force that would ensure the U.S. military has all the cyber capabilities and expertise it needs to operate effectively in both the offensive and defensive domains,” said Matt Pearl, Director of the Strategic Technologies Program in the Economic Security and Technology Department at CSIS.

The Commission’s work will be led by Co-Chairs Josh Stiefel, former Professional Staff Member with the House Armed Services Committee, and Lieutenant General (Ret.) Ed Cardon, former Commanding General of the U.S. Army Cyber Command.

“This debate of a military service aligned to the cyber domain has percolated for more than a decade,” said Mr. Stiefel. “The issue remains unresolved precisely because there’s a clear recognition that, as a country, we are not militarily meeting our potential, and the trajectory isn’t ‘good enough.’ Regardless of which side of the debate you sit on, if a service is to happen, everyone should agree that it is better to be prepared ahead of that moment, instead of reacting after the fact.”

LTG (ret.) Cardon said, “Having supported multiple organizational transformations within the Department of Defense, the most consequential phase begins after a decision is made—implementation. When this phase is neglected or rushed, the result is enduring organizational friction with inefficiencies, confusion that can persist for years, and degraded mission effectiveness. This project takes a different approach: it invests in implementation planning up front to generate momentum, reduce downstream risk, and accelerate outcomes if and when there is a decision to create a Cyber Force.”

The Commission will be made up of senior defense, national security, and technology industry experts. Their varied perspectives will enable the Commission to recommend policies that comprehensively address the challenges the Department of Defense faces in the cyber domain and propose how an independent Cyber Force will alleviate these issues.

Co-Directors:

Matt Pearl, Director, Strategic Technologies Program

Taylor Rajic, Associate Fellow, Strategic Technologies Program



Commission Manager:

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Commission Members:

Mr. Josh Stiefel (Co-Chair) Former Professional Staff Member, House Armed Services Committee	LTG Ed Cardon, USA (ret.) (Co-Chair) Former Commanding General, U.S. Army Cyber Command
Ms. Perri Adams Former Program Manager, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	RADM Mark Montgomery, USN (ret.) Senior Fellow at Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, and Former Director of Operations, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command
Mr. Joe Lin Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Twenty	Mr. Robert M. Lee Chief Executive Officer, Dragos
Dr. Michael Sulmeyer Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense	LtGen Chris Weggeman, USAF (ret.) Former Deputy Commander, Air Combat Command, and Former Commander, Air Forces Cyber /24th Air Force
Dr. Erica Lonergan Assistant Professor, Columbia University	COL Chris Reid, USA (ret.) Former Director of Resource Management and Capability Integration, U.S. Cyber Command
CAPT Mike Herlands, USN (ret.) Former Commanding Officer, Navy Cyber Warfare Development Group	LCDR Tyson Meadors, USN (ret.) Director of Cyber, Anduril, and Former Director, National Security Council
Lt. Gen. Jerry Glavy, USMC (ret.) Former Deputy Commandant for Information, and Former Commander, Marine Forces Cyberspace Command	Maj. Gen. Ryan Heritage, USMC (ret.) Former Director of Operations, United States Cyber Command, and Former Commander, Marine Forces Cyberspace Command



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