

JED Online Exclusive: Meet the New Boss of the 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing

By John Haystead

On July 9, Col. Josh Koslov relinquished command of the 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing (SWW) to Col. Larry Fenner Jr., who is the Wing's third commander.

From the outset, at the change-of-command ceremony, Fenner made clear he is truly passionate about advancing the mission of the Wing. In accepting command, Fenner said, "I'm thrilled to work with you, and for you, to dominate the spectrum and to win. No matter what corner of the world the threat comes from, we will continue to provide cutting edge full-spectrum capabilities and expertise to decimate our adversaries, so help me God." To anyone speaking with Fenner for just a few minutes, it's clear that he's truly sincere in that promise.

Fenner comes to the position with years of EW experience. He describes his career path within the EW community as a "...building-block approach. I started out as a brand-new Crow when the 563rd Flight Training Squadron (FTS) was at Randolph AFB, and I was going through my schooling there, then as a B-52 EW0."

Subsequently, Fenner would go on to become Command EW0 at Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). There, he says, was where he really started to expand his appreciation of the Joint portfolio of EMS0. "I would go to the Joint EW Center (JEWEC) for their Joint EW Course, which dramatically expanded my aperture beyond just platform specificity. I recognized how much could be achieved within the entire EM environment, not just from the air, but also from the ground, sea, and space domains to really enhance our warfighting capabilities."

His next building block would take to him to Global Strike Command (AFGSC). "This is where I had an opportunity to get into the acquisition community and to work on requirements." Fenner encourages any officer moving forward with their careers, to get such experience. "Understanding how the actual programs move forward, the requirements that need to be laid in ahead of time, and how the funding gets to those programs is invaluable. Everybody thinks their program is the top program. But if you look at things from a wider point-of-view, and how Congress will see it, you can better understand what programs truly need to be prioritized, as we continue to build up the Air Force for the global-power competition."

Following through on the accomplishments of Koslov in operationalizing the Wing, Fenner says, he plans to focus on a number of areas as the Wing continues to move forward and builds out the manpower and facilities needed to accomplish the mission into the future.

Addressing each of the Wing's three mission areas, Fenner says rapid-reprogramming will remain at the top of his list. "How can we get faster, and how can we continue to build the infrastructure needed to get faster and more efficient." He also points to the targeted waveform element of the Wing's core mission. "As a B-52 guy that built up target packages and did cradle-to-grave planning when it came to knocking out the specifics of what we needed to target things within the electromagnetic environment, I very clearly recognize how important targeted waveform development is, as well as having the subject-matter expertise necessary to accomplish it. It's something that will be big on my plate." Fenner also highlights the Wing's capabilities-assessment mission. "Now that we have activation approval for the 950th SWG, getting those detailed electronic combat EW assessments is going to be at the top on my list, as well. It's a lot of things that I'm moving forward with, but all three are equally important to me."

Summing up, Fenner says he's excited for the EW community overall. "Our EW skillset and EW capabilities had been starting to erode, but now we have the subject-matter experts needed to address these complex problems. With this particular Wing, we get to build something to leave our mark for the future. So, when we're out there recruiting and talking to folks about coming on board with this team, we're telling them we're building the EMSO complex that will take EMSO superiority into the future and will enhance and enable the warfighters' ability to succeed in the great power competition of today and tomorrow. Come aboard if you want to be part of that."