

Biography

General C. Robert "Bob" Kehler, USAF (ret)

General Bob Kehler served as the Commander, United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, from January 2011 until November 2013. He retired from active duty 31 December 2013.

As the Commander of United States Strategic Command, General Kehler was directly responsible to the Secretary of Defense and President for the plans and operations of all U. S. forces conducting global strategic deterrence, nuclear alert, global strike, space, cyberspace and associated operations. While in command, he crafted and implemented critical elements of policies and plans to deter strategic attacks against the U.S. and its key allies, and led a joint team of over 60,000 military and civilians in multiple global operations. He also integrated Department of Defense (DOD) activities for global missile defense, combating weapons of mass destruction, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. His forces directly supported combat operations in Southwest Asia and North Africa.

General Kehler's military career spanned almost thirty-nine years of service that included progressively significant operational and staff assignments. He was one of a very few Air Force officers to command at the squadron, group, wing, major command, and combatant command levels, and he had a broad range of operational experience in Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), space launch, space control, space surveillance and missile warning units. Before taking command of Strategic Command, General Kehler commanded Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) where he organized, trained, and equipped over 46,000 airmen and civilians conducting mission-ready nuclear missile, space, and cyberspace operations. In that role, he designed the Air Force's inaugural blueprint, operating concept, organizational structure, and personnel program to meet rapidly growing cyberspace challenges. General Kehler's other command tours included the 508th Missile Squadron (ICBM), 341st Operations Group (ICBM), 30th Space Wing (Space Launch), and 21st Space Wing (Missile Warning and Space Control). He also served as Deputy Commander, 351st Operations Group (ICBM), Deputy Director of Operations (AFSPC), and as Deputy Commander of USSTRATCOM.

His staff assignments included tours with the Air Staff, Strategic Air Command, Air Force Space Command, and the Joint Staff. As a young officer he served in the Secretary of the Air Force's Office of Legislative Liaison where he was the point man on Capitol Hill for matters regarding nuclear deterrence and ICBM modernization. As Director of the National Security Space Office, General Kehler integrated the activities of a number of DOD and Intelligence Community organizations on behalf of the Undersecretary of the Air Force and Director, National Reconnaissance Office.

He entered the Air Force in 1975 as a Distinguished Graduate of the Pennsylvania State University R.O.T.C. program, has master's degrees from the University of Oklahoma in Public Administration and the Naval War College in National Security and Strategic Studies, and completed executive level programs at Carnegie-Mellon University, Syracuse University, and Harvard University.

General Kehler's military awards include the Defense Distinguished and Superior Service Medals, the Distinguished Service Medal (2 awards), Legion of Merit (3 awards), and the French Legion of Honor (Officer). He wears Command Space and ICBM Operations Badges.

Upon retirement, he returned to Washington, DC, where he offers consulting services from his home office. A Senior Fellow of the National Defense University and an Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, he has spoken widely on matters of national security. He was the S.T. Lee Distinguished Lecturer at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies for academic year 2014-2015, and is a Distinguished Alumnus of the Pennsylvania State University.

General Kehler serves on several corporate and advisory boards. He enjoys playing the guitar, golf, and family.