

## **GPS director to take leadership role in NRO's Future Imagery Architecture**

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08/16/2002

Aerospace Daily

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Air Force Col. Douglas Loverro, head of the Global Positioning System joint program office, is slated to take a high-level post in the National Reconnaissance Office's troubled Future Imagery Architecture (FIA) program, sources said Aug. 15.

An NRO spokesman declined to describe what Loverro's exact role will be with the classified FIA program, but said his job title will be director of the data provider element within the imagery intelligence directorate, meaning he will have a leadership position in FIA.

Air Force Col. Wesley Ballenger, now director of space and special systems management at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Ga., is expected to replace Loverro as director of the Los Angeles-based GPS program office in September.

FIA is a next-generation system of imagery reconnaissance satellites and ground infrastructure. It is intended to provide more timely imagery for military operations than is currently available.

But the FIA program is believed to be experiencing cost and schedule problems. The program is counting on significant technological advances, and knowing what it will take to achieve those advances is considered a difficult challenge.

News of Loverro's appointment was welcomed in at least some circles on Capitol Hill, where there is hope he can help fix the program's problems. Loverro "has a reputation for being a strong program manager, smart and savvy," a congressional source told The DAILY.

John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a defense and intelligence research firm, said FIA is experiencing problems that other programs have had at similar stages in their development.

FIA is trying to transition from the design phase to the building phase, a point where "you start to realize your initial Powerpoint design was a little optimistic," Pike said.

The NRO in October 1999 awarded a contract to the Boeing Co. to develop, provide launch integration and operate the FIA satellites. In April 1999, it awarded a contract to Raytheon Systems Co. to deploy and integrate the ground infrastructure portion of FIA, known as the Mission Integration and Development (MIND) program.