Since 1949, Alabama and the nation have benefitted greatly from an installation at the Redstone Arsenal called the U.S. Army Missile Command. Employing more than 7,000 soldiers and government civilian workers, including some 2,000 engineers, MICOM manages the U.S. Army's missile and rocket programs.

The presence of this government entity and its predecessor organizations at Redstone is directly responsible for the establishment of the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center and the U.S. Army Strategic Defense Command. The missions of these two entities were begun in MICOM. The economic benefits of the six billion dollar annual budget for this installation cannot be overstated; however, the work performed here by the military and civilian engineers and scientists has brought worldwide recognition to this section of our state.

This team of highly skilled technical and managerial people have developed and applied the weapons technology that revolutionized ground warfare. The mission includes research, development, test, evaluation, procurement and logistics support of all Army tactical missiles and rockets. The highly successful execution of this mission has resulted in the high technology weapons that played such a major role in the American victory achieved in Operation Desert Storm: Patriot, Hellfire, Multiple Launch Rocket System, Army Tactical Missile System, and TOW, capping a four-decade effort. Deployment of the MICOM-managed Pershing II ballistic missile in Europe during the mid-1980s led to the landmark Treaty on Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces between the United States and the Soviet Union, generally acknowledged to mark the end of the Cold War between the two nuclear superpowers.

MICOM can count among its trophies, at least 10 “firsts” in the industry and many other pioneering efforts, including those that have brought significant changes to our way of life—laser surgery among them.

The presence of MICOM and its predecessors has been a major contributing cause of the establishment and continued expansion of the aerospace industries which give Huntsville and Madison County the largest concentration of engineering talent in the southeastern United States and an international reputation as a center of science and technology. Among the entities spawned by this growth was the establishment of the University of Alabama in Huntsville to provide a continuing source of advanced technical training for MICOM engineers and scientists.

This unique combination of military, government and civilian workforce, fueled by a strong engineering program in the state is truly a model for future communities. With the continued excellence already exhibited by this tandem, we can be assured that MICOM will be here long into the future.