



Commercial Space and National Security Breakout Session

Overview

America's domination in Space has allowed unimpeded overmatch in the areas of communications, position, navigation, and tracking, and ISR. This domain superiority has been facilitated by public entities whose R&D, capability development, and innovation have served as catalysts for enhanced satisfaction of Space related missions. Other nations, however, are challenging U.S. superiority and greater public-partner partnerships are needed to thwart threats. The panel will look at how that partnership can be improved, what policy issues are emerging from the Executive Branch, where the government needs greater public sector assistance, and what are the pros and cons of greater private sector support.

Summary

This panel discussed the challenges faced by the U.S. commercial space sector in the wake of a shifting strategic environment and unprecedented competition in space from other countries. The private sector can offer manifold capabilities to the government, but there is a cultural bottleneck within government in adopting these capabilities.



Panelists

- **Mr. Dave Gauthier**, Director, Commercial and Business Operations, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)
- **Mr. Steve Kitay**, Senior Director, Azure Space, Microsoft
- **Ms. Audrey Schaffer**, Director for Space Policy, National Security Council, The White House
- **Col. Tim Trimailo**, USAF, Materiel Leader, CASINO Program Office, Innovation and Prototyping Directorate, SMC Development Corps, Space and Missile Systems Center
- **Mr. Chuck Beames**, Chairman, SmallSat Alliance (moderator)

Key Takeaways:

- U.S. adversaries' heavy investments in space-based military and commercial capabilities have shifted the strategic environment in space. Antiquated regulatory and acquisitions models hinder the U.S. government's ability to keep pace with this threat.
- The Biden administration's [Interim National Security Strategic Guidance](#) names space as a major arena for strategic competition. China is the only actor capable of mobilizing all its resources to challenge the United States in space. The administration is focused on tapping into the burgeoning private sector market for space services.
- Cyber threats continue to challenge the space industry as systems grow increasingly interconnected. Moreover, government and industry share common vulnerabilities in space that can only be addressed through public-private partnerships.
- Because military budget planning can take 2 or 3 years, it is difficult for the government to incorporate rapidly changing space capabilities into its planning.

Recommendations

- Read the RAND Corporation's report: ["A Clean Sheet Approach to Space Acquisition in Light of the New Space Force."](#)
- The government should explore ways to streamline the acquisition process and cut red tape for organizations offering commercial space capabilities. When the military wants to integrate a new space-based capability, it should shop around in commercial markets before developing its own capability.
- The newly established Space Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Space ISAC) should be empowered to facilitate interaction between government and industry.
- Losing command and control over just 1 or 2 satellites can have a destructive impact on the availability of key government information. The government should create redundancies in its space-based information environment to prevent total system failure.

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