



FACT SHEET: National Security Space Strategy



The National Security Space Strategy (NSSS) charts a path for the next decade to respond to the current and projected strategic space environment. Leveraging emerging opportunities will strengthen the U.S. national security space posture while maintaining and enhancing the advantages gained from space.

The NSSS is jointly signed by the secretary of defense and the director of national intelligence. It builds on the President's National Security Strategy and National Space Policy, as well as the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review and the Intelligence Community's National Intelligence Strategy. The NSSS culminates the Space Posture Review.

Strategic Environment:

Space is vital to the national security of the United States and its allies. As the space environment evolves, we are faced with new opportunities and new challenges. The current and future strategic space environment is driven by three trends – space is becoming increasingly congested, contested, and competitive.

- Congested – The Department of Defense tracks roughly 22,000 man-made objects in orbit, of which 1,100 are active satellites. There may be as many as hundreds of thousands of additional objects too small to track but still capable of damaging satellites in orbit.
- Contested – Space systems face a range of man-made threats that can deny, degrade, deceive, disrupt, or destroy them. Potential adversaries are seeking to exploit perceived space vulnerabilities.
- Competitive – Although the United States still maintains an overall edge in space capabilities, the U.S. competitive advantage and technological lead is eroding in several areas as market-entry barriers lower and expertise among other nations increases.

Strategic Objectives:

We must address the growing challenges in the space domain. Our national security space objectives, as derived from the National Security Strategy and National Space Policy, are to:

- Strengthen safety, stability, and security in space;
- Maintain and enhance the strategic national security advantages afforded to the United States by space; and
- Energize the space industrial base that supports U.S. national security.

Strategic Approaches:

The NSSS draws on all elements of national power and requires active U.S. leadership in space. The United States will pursue a set of interrelated strategic approaches to meet our national security space objectives:

- Promote responsible, peaceful, and safe use of space;
- Provide improved U.S. space capabilities;
- Partner with responsible nations, international organizations, and commercial firms;
- Prevent and deter aggression against space infrastructure that supports U.S. national security; and
- Prepare to defeat attacks and to operate in a degraded environment.

Addressing the Challenges:

Congestion – Our words and deeds should reassure our allies and the world at large of our intent to act peacefully and responsibly in space; we will encourage others to do the same. To strengthen safety, stability, and security in space, we will:

- Establish norms and transparency and confidence-building measures;
- Enhance space situational awareness; and
- Foster greater transparency and sharing of space-derived information.

Contested environment – We will use a multilayered deterrence approach to prevent and deter aggression. We will:

- Support efforts to promote norms of responsible behavior in space;
- Pursue partnerships that encourage restraint;
- Improve our ability to attribute attacks, strengthen our resilience, and retain the right to respond, should deterrence fail.

Competition – A resilient, healthy, and flexible space industrial base must underpin all of our activities in space. To energize the industrial base that supports U.S. national security, we will:

- Enhance our space capabilities;
- Improve our acquisition processes;
- Foster a healthy U.S. industrial base; and
- Strengthen our collaboration and cooperation.

Next steps:

The National Security Space Strategy will inform future planning, programming, acquisition, operations, and analysis guidance. The Department of Defense and the Intelligence Community will work with other U.S. Government agencies and partners, as well as with foreign governments and commercial partners, to update, balance, and integrate all of the tools of U.S. power. We will evolve policies, strategies, and doctrine pertaining to national security space.