



Aerospace Technology Working Group



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ATWG proposal for facilitating space applications and infrastructure

Present Situation: The U.S has led the world in the use of space systems to address critical societal needs in areas such as agriculture, law enforcement, banking, the military, education, weather/climate monitoring and forecasting, natural resource management, and many other segments of our society. Vibrant industries have been developed that use space to facilitate communications, remote sensing, navigation, and other capabilities. But we have just scratched the surface of the possible achievements. Development of new and better space applications and infrastructure by government and private interests can be the foundation of many industries in the 21st century. Other nations, however, are moving faster than the U.S. to capitalize on some of these emerging opportunities. At the same time, the present economic crisis compels us to find appropriate ways to invest in infrastructure for the future, while creating jobs and stimulating commerce.

Consequences of this Situation: If the U.S fails to take the lead in creating and using the next generation of space capabilities to support Earthly needs, we will become reliant on other nations to provide critical elements of space infrastructure. We also will fall behind in developing industries that will be critical to future economic success and national security.

Possible Solutions:

- (1) Recognize and publicly promote the importance of space applications in satisfying our critical national needs, and highlight their future potential contributions to the U.S. and the world.
- (2) Direct every Executive Branch department to explore how best to promote and use emerging space capabilities to meet their assigned needs.
- (3) Identify and support public sector investment in needed infrastructure to support emerging space industries. Infrastructure includes, among other things, launching objects into space, processing and disseminating information obtained in space, and development of the workforce necessary to implement these capabilities.
- (4) Identify and support initiatives that encourage development of promising private and government uses of space that support national and global needs.

Recommendations:

- (1) Publish a Presidential Directive clarifying our nation's intention to be a leader in expanding our economic sphere into space and to promote public and private ventures that use space resources and capabilities to promote the general welfare.
- (2) Establish an interagency working group of the appropriate agencies to identify the necessary policies, directives, regulations and operational goals and budgets of government agencies that need to be amended to fully conform to this directive.
- (3) Consider federal investments in space infrastructure and new space capabilities while constructing measures to provide near-term economic stimulus and high-leverage jobs to create long term industrial strength.