

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~**DRAFT****NATIONAL SPACE POLICY****- CIVIL SPACE APPLICATIONS -**OVERVIEW

Past federal initiatives in civil space applications have led, or are leading, to wide-ranging achievements. They include the first--

- geostationary satellite (SYNCOM)
- polar-orbiting meteorological satellite (TIROS)
- geostationary meteorological satellite (SMS/GOES)
- earth resources satellite (Landsat)
- ocean observing satellite (Seasat)
- direct broadcast satellite (ATS-6)

Civil space applications fit three categories: (1) The expected benefit is principally to Government operations or responsibilities--e.g., the weather satellites. (2) The expected benefit is principally to the private sector or the economy at large--e.g., the direct broadcast satellite. (3) The benefit is divided between the Government and the private sector--e.g., Landsat.

ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The United States will continue to carry out a vigorous, but carefully focused, federal program in research, development, and operations for civil space applications. It will emphasize:

- Lowering the cost and improving the effectiveness of Government operations, as in providing weather services.
- Exploring the scientific basis for understanding the Earth and the near-Earth space environment, as in contributing to studies of climatic change.
- Carrying out high risk, but high return space technology initiatives that are beyond the reach of private initiatives, but of sufficient value to warrant federal action.
- Furthering the international competitiveness of U.S. aerospace industry via direct or indirect federal action.
- Enhancing U.S. prestige internationally and contributing to U.S. foreign policy objectives.

ROLE OF PRIVATE INDUSTRY

It is the policy of the United States to rely upon U.S. private industry to the maximum extent possible for goods and services required for its operations. This reliance ranges from manufacture of space hardware to operations and maintenance of space systems to leasing of commercial services where available. The minimum controls will be employed that are necessary to ensure Government authority over essential functions.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The United States reaffirms its dedication to international cooperation in civil space applications. The U.S. will seek vigorously for opportunities to join forces with other countries to pursue activities that are of mutual benefit.

Complementary foreign remote sensing systems, a policy of nondiscriminatory, open data distribution, and active cooperation permit the greatest benefit to all nations, and particularly the United States. Remote sensing systems could involve either meteorological or resources sensing. An example of a desirable foreign initiative would be the provision of a complementary polar-orbiting meteorological satellite to augment the capability of the U.S. system. It would lessen the burden on the U.S. for the weather data provided internationally.

REMOTE SENSING

Weather Satellites

The United States Government will participate actively in the World Meteorological Organization and support the operation of civil weather satellites. The data produced by these satellites shall be made freely available to the world community. The provision of these data will continue to be a federal responsibility in the future, as it has been in the past.

Land Satellites

For land remote sensing, the Government will seek the greatest possible involvement by the private sector to allow the system cost to be fairly shared among governmental and private data users. The private sector involvement will be consistent with U.S. policies on international and domestic data dissemination.

Agency Responsibilities

NASA is the nation's premier advanced space research and development agency. It will continue to explore the frontiers of space technology.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce is assigned the following roles: (1) serve as the federal focal point for space-based civil remote sensing of the land, air, ocean, and their interfaces; (2) responsibility for the establishment of federal objectives for research and development for operational systems for civil remote sensing; (3) aggregation of federal needs in civil space remote sensing; (4) regulation and management, as required, of federal or private initiatives to meet civil needs; and (5) representing private sector interests in interactions with classified national security programs.

Relationship to National Security Programs

Technology Sharing: Civil federal space activities will take the fullest advantage of technologies available from the national security sector, and will rely upon joint projects and programs when possible.

Command and Control: In times of national emergency, command and control of civil systems usable for critical national security needs shall be assumed by appropriate defense entities.

SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

Past federal initiatives in satellite communications technology have produced a direct and positive economic contribution to the nation. There will continue to be a federal role in maintaining U.S. leadership in this vital area. This role will range from sponsoring the development of high-risk technologies to fostering the transfer and use of technology developed under national defense systems. As the largest single buyer of space communications services, the U.S. will maintain a core institutional expertise to assure a first-hand knowledge of the latest state-of-the-art to guide those purchases.

MATERIALS PROCESSING IN SPACE

The use of the unique space environment to assist in our understanding of materials science or to produce new or better materials offers a fertile area for joint industry-Government endeavors. It combines high-risk technology with innovative use of the Space Shuttle and promises potentially high payoffs. The United States will participate actively in this area of research and will seek the greatest possible degree of collaboration with industry and the academic community.