



Fact Sheet: 2013 National Space Transportation Policy

November 21, 2013

The United States has long been a leader in space, and President Obama remains committed to maintaining America's competitiveness in the aerospace sector. The National Space Transportation Policy the President signed today will ensure that the United States stays on the cutting edge by maintaining space transportation capabilities that are innovative, reliable, efficient, competitive, and affordable, and that support U.S. interests.

More specifically, the policy:

- Supports our domestic aerospace industry. The U.S. government will use commercial space transportation products and services to help fulfill government needs, invest in new and advanced technologies and concepts, and use a broad array of partnerships with industry to promote innovation.
- Helps strengthen our economy and creates high-quality jobs, sustains a high-technology workforce, and ensures the viability and competitiveness of our industrial base by supporting the burgeoning private space sector.
- Encourages partnerships with private industry to put U.S. government instruments on non-governmental spacecraft, which will increase scientific and other capabilities, facilitate access to space, and save taxpayer dollars using arrangements known as "hosted payloads".
- Reaffirms the importance of assuring U.S. access to space, and directs further research and development (R&D) to improve the reliability, responsiveness, performance, and cost-effectiveness of current and future U.S. space transportation systems.
- Continues progress in support of the bi-partisan plan for space exploration codified in the NASA Authorization Act of 2010 by urging development of a heavy-lift launch vehicle and encouraging cooperation with commercial companies to fly NASA astronauts and cargo safely and more cost-effectively to the International Space Station.
- Fosters cooperation with industry to develop guidelines for the development and expansion of the U.S. commercial human spaceflight market.

The policy provides comprehensive guidance to all Federal Departments and Agencies on U.S. priorities and on roles and responsibilities with respect to space transportation issues and programs. It updates and replaces the 2004 U.S. Space Transportation Policy.

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