



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

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For Immediate Release

August 20, 2020

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National Academy of Public Administration Panel Releases Report on Space Traffic Management

*Panel Recommends Office of Space Commerce Leads Collaborative Federal Efforts;
Urges Swift Action from Congress to Enact Appropriations and Authorizations*

WASHINGTON, DC – A panel of the National Academy of Public Administration today released a [Congressionally requested report](#) for the U.S. Department of Commerce on commercial space traffic management (STM). The Panel recommends that the Department’s Office of Space Commerce (OSC) continue to lead collaborative federal efforts to improve the safety and sustainability of the space domain and bolster American leadership in space. The report also recommends that Congress act swiftly to enact appropriations and authorizations for OSC’s work, underscoring the urgent nature of the issue.

“As space becomes increasingly congested with growing numbers of domestic and foreign commercial companies, researchers, universities, and military/intelligence agencies launching orbital assets, the risk of orbital collisions has grown astronomically,” said Academy Panel Chair Michael Dominguez, a former senior official with the U.S. Department of Defense. “The issue of space traffic management has become an urgent concern -- one that the government must address in order to ensure orbital safety, as well as enhance U.S. commercial and research advances in this critical domain.”

Congress requested that the Academy provide an independent review of which civilian government agency would be best suited to lead and coordinate STM efforts to advance commercial and research uses of space outside of the national security sphere. The Academy panel report, *Space Traffic Management: Assessment of the Feasibility, Expected Effectiveness, and Funding Implications of a Transfer of Space Traffic Management Functions*, shows that four agency candidates were considered and that the Department of Commerce’s Office of Space Commerce was found to be the best suited to continue to lead a collaborative effort.

“Our Panel report identifies the federal organization best suited for this critical mission and calls for urgent action by Congress to authorize and appropriate adequate funding to it to accomplish the STM function,” said Terry Gerton, President and CEO of the Academy. “In addition, there is a clear emphasis throughout the report that the Office of

Space Commerce and the other agencies should work collaboratively and creatively across government and non-government sectors, both domestic and international, to shape effective strategies that will mitigate risks across the space ecosystem and achieve a safer space domain.”

The report notes that as a next step, “the Panel requests that the Congress enact, without delay, appropriations and any required authorities for OSC to build this critical capability with requisite personnel, office infrastructure, and authorities, as needed, to carry out the task of integrating whole of government capabilities to provide SSA and STM.”

The Academy’s five-member panel consisted of Panel Chair Michael Dominguez, a former senior U.S. Defense Department official who served as Acting Secretary of the Air Force and DoD Executive Agent for Space; Martin Faga, the former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space; Jane Fountain, the Director of the National Center for Digital Government at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; Patrick Kennedy, a former senior U.S. State Department official; and Sean O’Keefe, the former Administrator of NASA and former Secretary of the U.S. Navy. All are Fellows of the National Academy of Public Administration.

About the National Academy of Public Administration

Chartered by Congress to provide non-partisan expert advice, the Academy is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization established in 1967 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. Learn more at www.napawash.org

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