

57th IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Recent Developments in Space Law (5)

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RECENT DISCUSSION IN THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SPACE POLICY OF JAPAN

Abstract

Since their first satellite launching in 1970, Japan has been active in space development. But Japan had taken a very unique status on the other hand, that did not have the national comprehensive space policy including commercialization, national security, etc. Putting an emphasis on science and technology, Japan did not pay much attention to the practical fields for some reasons.

However, in response to the changes of the international environment in recent years, Japan created the Basic Space Law of 2008, for the space development and utilization on the all national level. By this law Japan has started making their legal system to forward Japanese space development in a comprehensive manner.

For reviewing the major space programs, Japanese Government established the Committee on National Space Policy in July, 2012. This Committee is placed in the Cabinet Office in accordance with the related laws, and has seven members elected from industry and academic societies. And this Committee has four Subcommittees which focus mainly on research and analysis, space transportation systems, space science and exploration, and the space industry. Receiving reports from such four Subcommittees, the Committee on National Space Policy will assess the major space projects and make recommendations to the Prime Minister and related Ministers of the Cabinet.

By this report the author will review the recent activities of the National Space Policy and its four Subcommittees, and try to analyze the role that they have played in the Japanese space development policy formulation.