

IAF SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (D2)
Launch Services, Missions, Operations, and Facilities (2)

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THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. NATIONAL SPACE TRANSPORTATION POLICIES, EELV, AND NEW
ALTERNATIVES

Abstract

The U.S. government has a long history of supporting the commercial transportation industry to achieve increased transportation capabilities. The completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869 would have never been possible without government funding and land grants. The 1925 Contract Air Mail Act allowed the U.S. post office to contract with private companies to deliver mail. This helped transition air travel from a risky venture to a routine operation. Space transportation has also received funding from the U.S. government to help facilitate launches in both the national security and civil space sectors. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) each have their own acquisition processes for launch services. The paper will compare the acquisition policies of NASA and DoD. Obtaining commercial launch services has required significant government investment, but there have been innumerable benefits as a result. Both NASA and the DoD have multiple launch vehicle providers that help achieve mission success.

This paper will discuss the evolution of National Space Transportation Policies and relevant launch legislation. It will also delve into the history of the EELV program and the current status of the next generation EELV. The paper will include an overview of announced and potential EELV competitors and potential strategies for the DoD's Next Generation EELV program.