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Strategic Risk Management for successful space & defence programmes (6)

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IS IT WORTH THE RISK? – AN ASTRONAUT’S APPROACH TO RISK AWARENESS

Abstract

The need to make human spaceflight as safe as technically possible is a characteristic of this special branch of space missions and drives the cost and feasibility of human space exploration. Between the time prospective astronauts first apply for a chance to fly into space and the actual time when they climb into the spacecraft on top of a rocket for the first flight, risk awareness, mitigation, and assessment are present as a constant background reflection. What drives human explorers to accept the remaining non-mitigatable risks and when is the individual “go” decision made? In light of future long-term missions leading humans again from LEO into deep space a sound understanding of this decision process may lead to an improved selection and composition of capable space expedition crews.