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AUSTRALIA: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SPACE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Abstract

In the past decade, with 2009 being a tipping point, Australia has become considerably more involved in a range of space activities including Space Situational Awareness (SSA). A series of bilateral and multilateral commitments have been made, including with the United States and the United Kingdom. Early in 2012, Australia announced support for the European Code of Conduct as the basis for debris management and mitigation in the future. Also technologies which offer considerable promise in debris characterisation and mitigation, subject to policy and operational safeguards which must be agreed by the international community, are being developed in Australia.

This paper explores the basis for Australia's interest and involvement in SSA, describes the involvement that is developing, and considers some options for future developments and their broader strategic and operational implications in the so-called "Asian Century" .