

IAF BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (E6)
Strategic Risk Management for Successful Space & Defence Programmes (4)

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WILL COMMERCIAL SPACEFLIGHT DELIVER?

Abstract

Today we are on the cusp of multiple new launch providers for commercial, civilian government, and military launch services in the United States and internationally. New providers are getting certified to launch NASA and USAF satellites in the United States as well as bringing supplies and soon crew to the International Space Station. This has been the result of policies for the last 20 years pushing more commercialization of low earth orbit and trying to fund new launch providers and new designs.

What are the risks to both governments and the commercial entities themselves? Are they well understood and based on the available data? What are the risks to the commercial providers relying on a few key government contracts? Policy changes, regulation changes, and economic disruptions can represent large risks to commercial providers without enough diversification. Are the benefits of commercial provider being faster and cheaper real, and are the risks worth the potential benefits to their customers? These and other risks will be discussed looking at past several decades of experience and new data from the last few years from the new wave of commercial providers.