

IAF HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT SYMPOSIUM (B3)
Governmental Human Spaceflight Programmes (Overview) (1)

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THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION'S CURRENT PLANS FOR
FUTURE LOW EARTH ORBIT OPERATIONS

Abstract

The United States, along with its international partners, have celebrated nearly a quarter century of successful operations in low Earth orbit (LEO) onboard the International Space Station (ISS). With the extension of the ISS as a working laboratory in orbit until at least 2030, the space station will continue to enable expanded operational experience, research, and commercial activity in low Earth orbit. Spearheaded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), with participation from international and commercial partners, the ISS has served as a research platform in space hosting technology, demonstrations, and scientific investigations from a range of fields for the benefit of humanity. This paper will analyze: 1) NASA's current and future space operations in and beyond low Earth orbit, including commercial launch services to the ISS; 2) NASA's vision and plans for commercial applications and destination services to fulfill the agency's future needs in LEO performing research and technology investigations; 3) how NASA will support its goal of becoming one of many customers in a thriving economy in LEO; 4) the economic value, scientific research and technological advancements that are enabled by growing a groundbreaking foundation of commercial architecture in LEO.