

35th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (E5)
Is Space R&D Truly Fostering A Better World For Our Future? (2)

Author: Mr. Scott Schneider
Australia

UNCOVERING THE UNSEEN IN ADVANCING SPACE ACTIVITIES: CORRELATING FUNDING
METHODS WITH THE OUTCOMES OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

This paper ultimately asks to what extent do the cost-benefit analyses between government and non-government firms make a difference to the actual progress of space activities and to the human benefits yielded from space activities. The significance of exploring this question is to identify the hidden costs in private and in governmental research and development efforts. The paper does not seek to place a value judgment on “whether the cost was worth the benefit” but, rather, to bring to light the often dismissed consideration of what are the alternatives to any one particular research and development objective or strategy. This requires exploring the goals of research and development and the resources needed to achieve any particular goal. The analysis first identifies the different incentives of and the different access to resources by government and non-government firms before exploring select case studies demonstrating the hidden costs of research and development from both perspectives. These costs are then placed alongside the declared or experienced benefits which allows readers to see both sides of the coin. Lessons which may be drawn from this study are intended to better enable managers of firms and policy-makers in government to allocate resources to the research and development efforts upon considering the “unseen”, or vicarious, outcomes which present themselves when investing in research and development priorities.