

The National Space Transportation Policy

August 20, 2026

Overview

The Trump Administration [released](#) a Presidential Memoranda titled “The National Space Transportation Policy”. This memorandum establishes a new U.S. national policy for space transportation and replaces the prior 2013 National Space Transportation Policy. Its overarching goal is to maintain U.S. leadership in space launch, reentry, and in-space transportation capabilities while accelerating commercial space industry growth.

The memo supersedes previous Presidential Policy Directive 26 of November 21, 2013 (National Space Transportation Policy) with provision of any previous Presidential Memorandum or Space Policy Directive, which this memorandum shall control.

National Space Transportation Goals Include:

- Expanding U.S. Launch and reentry infrastructure
- Supporting a competitive domestic commercial space industry
- Improving access to launch sites and airspace
- Strengthening supply chains and space workforce
- Promoting U.S. space transportation exports
- Prioritizing U.S. manufactured launch capabilities for government mission
- Developing commercial lunar and Mars transportation architectures

Space Launch and Reentry Infrastructure

The memorandum states that access to space is a national and economic security priority and sets a goal for U.S. ranges to support more than 1,000 launches and reentries annually by 2030.

National Space Transportation Goals include:

- Expand launch and reentry infrastructure
- Accelerate permitting and environmental reviews
- Improve access for commercial operators
- Publish range schedules
- Identify locations for additional launch facilities
- Integrate launch operations into airspace modernization efforts

Space Transportation Industrial Base

The Assistant to President for Science and Technology (APST) shall coordinate with relevant agencies to develop and implement a space transportation industrial base strategy. The initiative will assist in promoting and maintaining a competitive space industry to properly enable an American space superiority. Alongside strengthening and supporting workforce development and retention program, military service transition pathways, and government-industry exchanges. The Space Transportation industrial base strategy is set to be reviewed and updated every two years.

Space Transportation Market Access.

The Administration directs the State and Commerce Departments to promote U.S. space transportation companies globally and improve access to foreign markets. The objectives for the two departments are:

- Update export policies and programs to support U.S. space transportation capabilities abroad
- Promote industry advocacy, foreign sales, co-investment, and regulatory alignment with allies

International Collaboration

The memo establishes a White House Review process for foreign launch and reentry activities conducted in the United States. The White House will review request from foreign entities seeking to launch or reenter space vehicles from U.S. facilities, while evaluating impacts on U.S. national security and foreign policy. As the united states looks to maintain oversight of foreign participation in the U.S. space sector.

United State Government Space Transportation

Directs Federal agencies to prioritize domestic and commercial space transportation capabilities and strengthens government demand for U.S. provider. Key provisions include:

- Government payloads should be launched on U.S> manufactured vehicles, with limited exceptions
- Agencies are directed to favor commercial launch services whenever feasible
- Encourages multiple launch providers to ensure resiliency and competition
- Directs NASA to develop commercial lunar logistics capabilities and explore commercial Mars transportation architecture
- Directed the Department of Defense to pursue in-space logistics, on-orbit servicing, and rapid responsive launch concepts

Interagency Coordination

- The APST is responsible for coordinating government-wide implementation
- Agencies may request waivers, exceptions, or deviation through the APST for Presidential consideration
- Links implementation to the Administration broader effort to ensure U.S. space superiority

What it Means for Government

The memo directs agencies to favor commercial launch and transportation services whenever feasible rather than developing government-owned alternatives. The implications of the memo are:

- Increased use of commercial launch providers
- More public-private partnerships
- Greater use of rideshare, hosted payloads, and commercial logistics services
- Agencies become anchor customers for emerging space transportation capabilities

What it Means for Space Technology Vendors

- **Launch Infrastructure:** Government is directing agencies to improve launch capacity, identify new launch locations, and integrate launch operations into broader transportation infrastructure
- **Responsive Launch:** Call for evaluating capabilities that can support launch timelines within 48 hours for high-priority government needs
- **In-Space Logistics and Mobility:** Directs NASA and DOW to evaluate and utilize in-space transportation services and logistics architectures
- **Lunar Economy:** NASA is directed to develop a commercial lunar logistics and architecture utilizing industry capabilities
- **Domestic Manufacturing:** Policy directs government payloads to utilize U.S.-manufactured launch vehicles whenever possible
- **Export Growth:** DOS and DOC are directed to improve policies and market access for U.S. space transportation companies

Timeline

Policy	Key Dates	Focus & Key Provisions
Foreign Launch & Reentry Process	October 19, 2026	Creates a White House review process for foreign entities seeking to conduct launch or reentry operations in the United States. Reviews national security, foreign investment, industrial base impacts, liability protections, and launch infrastructure availability.
Commercial Space Transportation Preference	August 20, 2026	Requires federal agencies to favor commercial launch and transportation services, avoid competing with commercial providers, and expand rideshare and hosted payload opportunities.
Repeal of 2013 National Space Transportation Policy	August 20, 2026	Revokes Presidential Policy Directive-26 (2013) and replaces it with NSPM-17 as the governing U.S. space transportation policy.
Federal Reentry Site Identification	November 18, 2026	Directs the Department of the Interior to identify Federal lands suitable for development as an additional national reentry site to support growing commercial space activity.
Space Transportation Export Promotion Strategy	December 18, 2026	Directs State and Commerce Departments to update export policies, industry advocacy efforts, foreign sales initiatives, and market access programs to support U.S. space transportation providers in global markets.
Space Transportation Export Control Review	December 18, 2026	Requires review and modernization of export controls to enable greater trade opportunities with allies and partners while protecting national security interests.
Federal Launch Range Scheduling Framework	February 16, 2027	DoD and NASA are required to establish launch scheduling criteria that maximize launch range utilization, transparency, and commercial access while meeting government mission needs.
New Launch Site Assessment	February 16, 2027	Directs DOT to identify potential locations for additional launch facilities and infrastructure investments that support increasing launch demand.
Airspace Integration Modernization Plan	February 16, 2027	Develops a framework to integrate launch and reentry operations into broader airspace modernization efforts and improve operational efficiency.
Launch Infrastructure Security Assessment	February 16, 2027	Directs DoD and DHS to assess vulnerabilities and recommend actions to secure U.S. launch infrastructure and critical space transportation assets.
Responsive Launch Assessment	February 16, 2027	Evaluate operational, regulatory, and technological barriers to supporting rapid launch capabilities, including launch timelines of less than 48 hours for urgent government missions.
Spectrum Access Strategy	February 16, 2027	Requires Commerce and FCC to create a framework ensuring reliable spectrum access for launch, reentry, recovery, and on-orbit operations.
Reentry Safety Evaluation	February 16, 2027	Directs DOT to assess safety standards and regulatory requirements necessary to support newly designated commercial reentry sites.
Space Transportation Industrial Base Strategy	February 16, 2027	Establishes a national strategy to strengthen the U.S. space transportation industrial base through workforce development, supply chain resilience, investment, innovation, and competitiveness initiatives.
National Launch Capacity Goal	2030	Establishes a national objective for U.S. launch and reentry infrastructure to support more than 1,000 launches and reentries annually, reflecting expected growth in commercial, civil, and national security space activity.