



Robust Operationally Responsive Space: A Necessary Component of Affordable and Assured Space Power

AIA RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) concept should be provided the opportunity to live up to its intent of fulfilling rapid, responsive, affordable, on-demand space support for military operations utilizing both internal government and industry capabilities.
- Congress and the Department of Defense should increase funding for ORS in Fiscal Year 2010 and beyond to provide it with the resources outlined in the ORS strategy for 2010 through 2015.
- An investment in ORS should be a balanced approach among all elements of ORS, including development of all potential ORS platforms, payloads, and space access systems. Such a balanced approach will be essential for future ORS success.
- Strategies to expand the ORS model – to move it outside Department of Defense laboratories and into industry as well as other civil and commercial space efforts – should be pursued in order to create an environment that enables industry participation, ensures additional support to the U.S. warfighter, and helps strengthen the U.S. space industrial base.

BACKGROUND

With federal budgets facing constraints at a time of increased national security challenges, the concept of ORS has the potential to become an important model for fulfilling affordable, on-demand space support for military operations. ORS offers an approach to providing space power to the warfighter and national security community through a three-tiered strategy outlined by the Department of Defense that calls for (1) rapid exploitation of existing capabilities; (2) use of existing technologies and capabilities to replenish, augment and reconstitute; and (3) development of new technologies and capabilities to replenish, augment and reconstitute.

This concept aims to quickly reconstitute lost space capabilities, ultimately enhancing space survivability and deterrence. At a time when over 60 nations are engaged in a space environment crowded with tens of thousands of man-made objects, a plan to augment and reconstitute critical space assets is vital to providing the warfighter with the national security space capabilities on which they rely. Policymakers in the executive branch and the Congress strongly support the aggressive development of ORS capabilities. Progress in achieving a three-tiered strategy should be adequately funded if this nation is going to have near-term capability to quickly – and cost effectively – augment or replenish national security space systems.

KEY POINTS

- **Assured Space Power to the Warfighter.** Our troops in isolated and hard to reach regions such as Afghanistan rely on space assets for life-saving intelligence, communications, and UAV support. The ORS concept – if adequately funded – could provide important response capabilities to unforeseen events or unanticipated gaps in these space capabilities. By developing and deploying new methods to assure space power, ORS could serve as an effective deterrent from nations seeking to attack U.S. space assets.
- **Economic and Industrial Boost.** At a time of difficult and competing federal budgetary priorities, ORS seeks a low-cost approach to augment and surge existing space capabilities. While not a replacement for exquisite U.S. space systems, the ORS model could help provide needed small and low-cost systems resulting in additional business opportunities for industry and the U.S. space workforce. In addition, with the right policies in place, the ORS approach could help facilitate positive trade relationships with U.S. allies seeking to obtain low-cost space capabilities.
- **Exploit New Technical and Operational Innovations.** ORS is working to develop and deploy new and innovative concepts for national security space systems such as “plug and play” technology and increased payload flexibility. These concepts aim to bring down cost and increase the speed at which critical national security space assets can be deployed.