

Space Transportation Advisory Committee Model: *Leveraging Private Sector Input for Public Sector Regulations*



COMSTAC

Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee

FAA Office of Commercial Space Transportation

- First established in February 1984 by Executive Order 12465
- Originally under the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Transportation; transferred to the Federal Aviation Administration in 1995
- Responsible for both regulating commercial space activities and promoting the industry
- Office is led by Dr. George Nield



AST

Associate Administrator for
Commercial Space Transportation

Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Rm.331 Washington, DC 20591 (202)267-7793



Federal Advisory Committees

- Federal Advisory Committee Act passed in 1972
- Federal Advisory Committees provide expert, independent advice to government agencies
- Relevant examples to COPUOS include the NASA Advisory Council (NAC), the Defense Trade Advisory Committee (DTAG), and the COMSTAC

COMSTAC

- Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee
- Established in April 1984 by Order of the Secretary of Transportation
- Members are appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation for two-year terms
- The COMSTAC is comprised of 26 members including executives from Boeing, SpaceX, Lockheed Martin, Virgin Galactic, and Blue Origin



COMSTAC

Description of Duties

- Undertake such information-gathering activities as necessary to address issues identified by the AST [and] develop recommendations on those issues.
- Evaluate economic, technological, and institutional developments relating to commercial space transportation.
- Provide the AST with direct, first-hand information and insight about FAA regulations and rulemakings that may require changes or elimination.
- Serve as a forum for the discussion of problems involving the relationship between industry activities and Federal Government requirements.

COMSTAC Leadership

- Chair: Mike Gold
- Vice Chair: Michael Lopez-Alegria
- Four Working Group Chairs and Vice Chairs



COMSTAC Working Groups

- **Business/Legal Working Group, Chair: Christopher Kunstadter**
 - Responsible for issues concerning commercial space policy, regulations, market, and liability
- **Operations Working Group, Chair: Janet Karika**
 - Identifies key launch operations, support, and processing issues affecting U.S. commercial space competitiveness
- **Standards Working Group, Chair: Oscar Garcia**
 - Develops and prioritizes a list of standards that include both expendable launch vehicles and reusable launch vehicles
- **International Space Policy Working Group, Chair: Dr. Mark Sundahl**
 - Monitors and analyzes domestic and foreign trends, regulations, and policies that impact the global commercial space industry
 - Seeks to identify specific actions that can be taken by the FAA to allow the U.S. commercial space industry to prosper globally in a spirit of international cooperation

COMSTAC Operations

- Full Committee meets twice a year
- All meetings are free and open to the public
- Working Groups develop Observations, Findings, and Recommendations (“OFRs”) which are then presented, debated, and voted on by the full Committee
- Both Working Group and full Committee meetings often involve high-level speakers/guests from the U.S. Government or Congress
- The Chair transmits the COMSTAC’s OFRs to Dr. Nield who responds in writing to the Chair, the Chair then shares the AST’s responses with the COMSTAC membership

COMSTAC

COMSTAC broadcasts public meetings through the FAA AST website at:

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/advisory_committee/

COMSTAC meeting minutes and videos, bylaws, reports, news, and membership are also freely available through the FAA AST website at:

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ast/advisory_committee/about

An Example of a COMSTAC
Working Group:

The International Space Policy
Working Group
(ISPWG)

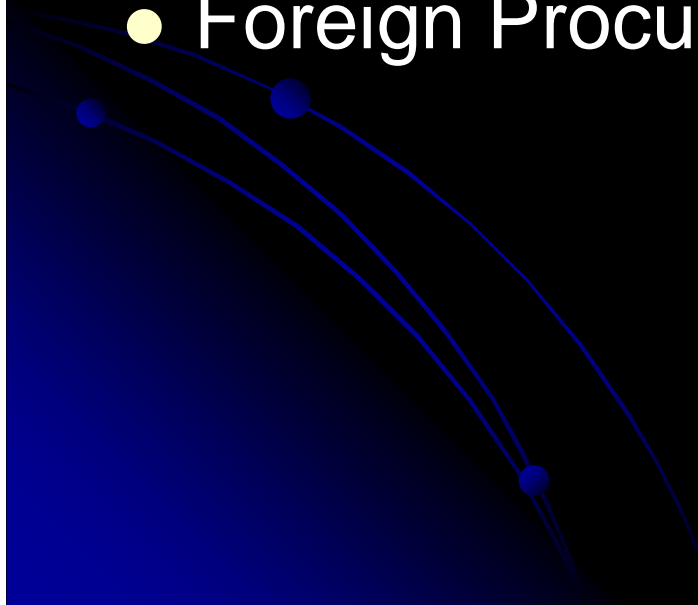


The ISPWG Mission

The International Space Policy Working Group (ISPWG) monitors and analyzes domestic and foreign trends, regulations, and policies that impact the global commercial space industry. ***The ISPWG seeks to identify specific actions that can be taken by the FAA to allow the U.S. commercial space industry to prosper globally in a spirit of international cooperation.***



Some Recent ISPWG Issues

- International Standards Initiatives (ISO et al.)
 - Emerging Domestic Regulations for Human Spaceflight
 - Foreign Procurement of Space Technology
- 

Sample Observations, Findings and Recommendations

- Observation: Other countries generally lack a separate governmental office analogous to the FAA AST that is dedicated to the licensing of commercial space transportation vehicles.
- Finding: A separate office dedicated to licensing commercial space transportation vehicles can be advantageous because of the special technological, business and legal issues that are unique to the commercial space transportation industry.

Sample Observations, Findings and Recommendations

- Finding: The COMSTAC finds that it would assist foreign countries in treating suborbital spacecraft differently from aircraft if a separate governmental office were created for the licensing of commercial space transportation vehicles.
- Recommendation: The COMSTAC recommends that the FAA AST encourage the aviation authorities of foreign countries to create a separate office for the licensing of commercial space transportation vehicles.

Private Sector Input is Vital

