



## FACT SHEET: Space Situational Awareness (SSA)

*“Shared awareness of spaceflight activity must improve in order to foster global spaceflight safety and help prevent mishaps, misperceptions, and mistrust.”*

2011 National Security Space Strategy

**Space is vital to national security and economic growth, but space is increasingly congested, contested, and competitive.** Space capabilities touch every facet of our lives – they allow people and governments around the world to see with clarity, communicate with certainty, navigate with accuracy, and operate with assurance. However, space is increasingly congested with tens of thousands of objects tracked by U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), contested by an ever-increasing number of man-made threats, and competitive, as more countries, companies, and nongovernmental organizations field space capabilities. The United States Government recognizes these challenges and seeks to promote international cooperation, space situational awareness (SSA) sharing, and responsible actions in space to address the ever-changing space environment.

**SSA helps protect commercial, civil, international, and security-related space operations.**

As more countries, companies, and nongovernmental organizations field space capabilities and benefit from the use of space systems, it is in our collective interest to act responsibly and to enhance the long-term sustainability, stability, safety, and security of the space environment. Improving SSA, both through technical advancements and the increased sharing of SSA, improves our ability to avoid collisions by rapidly detecting, warning, characterizing, and attributing natural or man-made phenomena affecting space systems and the space environment.

**The United States establishes SSA sharing agreements with commercial and international partners to promote safe spaceflight.** Effective SSA requires cooperation– we cannot do it alone. Sharing SSA information builds confidence between nations and commercial partners by increasing transparency, openness, and predictability of space operations. SSA agreements continue to enhance spaceflight safety for all parties by improving space object databases, promoting the use of existing international data standards and data integrity measures, disseminating orbital tracking information, including predictions of space object conjunctions and close approaches, and supporting other measures to preserve the space environment.

**We are committed to providing SSA services to enhance awareness within the space domain, and to increase the safety of space operations.** USSTRATCOM publicly shares space situational awareness information on the [SpaceTrack.org](http://SpaceTrack.org) website and provides more tailored information and services for owners and operators through sharing agreements to maximize spaceflight safety and the long-term sustainability of space.

*SSA sharing enhances the safety and sustainability of the space domain. It is vital to the economic success and national security of all nations.*