

DIRECTION OF AUSTRALIAN SPACE POLICY AND INDUSTRY

To whom it may concern

As I understand that you are interested in responses from any interested party, including non-Australians, I would like to submit the following brief observations:

I have been the editor of the international professional/academic journal *Space Policy* for the past 20 years and have been consistently surprised during this time by the low level of space activity (and consequent dearth of Australian perspectives in terms of article submission) in Australia compared with that of other 'industrialized' countries. This is all the stranger given that other countries in the region (e.g. South Korea, Malaysia) have been enthusiastically establishing and expanding a space programme. Even more surprising has been the apparent retreat from even this level of activity, despite the efforts of dogged individuals, demonstrated by the disbanding of the Cooperative Research Centre for Satellite Systems (CRS). My impression is that those interested in space are abandoning Australia in favour of work in Asia-Pacific countries where opportunities are more fruitful. Indeed, nations such as China and Japan clearly view space as an important tool for gaining regional influence; this is a tool, however, that Australia is in danger of losing altogether.

Thus a first priority should be making the highest levels of government aware of the importance of space not only as a tangible asset (economic, security, management of environment and natural resources - critical in the wake of your recent drought, etc) but also for its intangible benefits, and thereby showing the world that Australia is serious about space - an impression manifestly not given at the moment (though this exercise is a start). This would imply the appointment or at least identification of people with expert knowledge able to elucidate the multifarious benefits of space to the right people. Following on from this, a further priority would be, if not reinstating CRS, establishment of some organization(s) that would provide a focus, and work opportunities, for space in the country.

Such bodies would be best placed to identify those areas where Australia is likely to possess a comparative advantage. To me these would seem to lie in your proximity to the equator and thus favourable launch environment (what has happened to the Cape York spaceport project??), resurrectable infrastructure (e.g. Woomera) and well educated scientific and technical workforce.

Placing greater emphasis on space cooperation with regional space powers such as Japan, China and India would also be a helpful way of developing capabilities.

Frances Brown (Ms)
Editor, *Space Policy*
Seabank