

SPACE SYSTEMS COMMAND

Media Release



SPACE SYSTEMS COMMAND
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Space Systems Command awards \$25.5 Million Contract to Astroscale U.S. Inc. for advancement of Space Mobility and Logistics capabilities

CAPE CANAVERAL SPACE FORCE STATION, Fla. – Space Systems Command’s Assured Access to Space (AATS) Directorate, in collaboration with the Space Development Corps’ Space Enterprise Consortium (SpEC), awarded a \$25.5 million contract to Astroscale U.S. Inc. to advance Space Mobility and Logistics (SML) capabilities.

For more than 60 years, satellites’ designs and operations have been constrained because they have been required to launch carrying a “lifetime” fuel supply. This constraint dictated the size, weight, and costs for both satellites and their launch vehicles, reduced mission payloads’ capabilities, and forced frequent tradeoffs between on-orbit operations and maintaining or extending mission life.

By contrast, the Air Force has routinely refueled most aircraft in-flight since the mid-1950s, and the Navy has refueled underway ships since shortly after Pearl Harbor. Both services

used these capabilities to significantly expand mission responsiveness, capabilities, capacities, and operational flexibility for individual platforms and entire force structures.

SSC/AATS extends this capability to the U.S. Space Force at the speed of relevance. By 2026, Astroscale U.S. Inc. will deliver a servicing vehicle prototype, that will provide in-space refueling for compatible satellites.

The proposed solution leverages a refueling technology advanced by previous industry/Government partnerships, delivering fuel to client vehicles, and permitting them to remain on-station and on-mission. In doing so, U.S. Space Force's on-orbit capabilities and operational flexibility will strengthen deterrence and enable more diverse and effective responses to the growing threat posed by our adversaries' military space capabilities. By itself, this innovation will transform the existing paradigm for space operations.

This program realizes the strategy of acquiring commercially available platforms and procuring services for national security missions, accelerates delivery of new capabilities, and reduces development costs. Additionally, it demonstrates the Space Force's continued leadership, agility, and commitment to innovations advancing Space Mobility and Logistics for the warfighter.

AATS leveraged a non-traditional contract approach, an "Other Transaction Authority" (OTA), through the Space Enterprise Consortium to rapidly solicit and award this effort. In less than five months, the project team advanced from appropriation to award. OTAs foster collaboration and partnership between government agencies and industry partners,

encouraging open dialogue, information sharing, joint problem-solving, and alignment of interests. This collaborative approach expedites solutions that meet the needs of both partners.

“The Space Force is ready to respond to the unquestionable need identified by our warfighters and industry is enthusiastic to help us address the challenges of the new space age we find ourselves in,” said Col. Joyce Bulson, USSF Service lead for SML, headquartered at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. “Responses to this solicitation were overwhelming, signaling that innovation is ready to take hold, with proper unity of effort and vision from the Service. I’m excited for the opportunities to both rise to the challenges set forth by our warfighters and advance our nation’s space capabilities.”

Space Systems Command is the U.S. Space Force’s field command responsible for acquiring and delivering resilient warfighting capabilities to protect our nation’s strategic advantage in and from space. SSC manages an \$15 billion space acquisition budget for the DoD and works in partnership with joint forces, industry, government agencies, academic, and allied organizations to accelerate innovation and outpace emerging threats. Our actions today position us to secure the nation's strategic advantage in space.

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