



# ***Space Commerce Highlights***

## **News from the Office of Space Commerce**

### **December 2024**

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### ***From the Director***

Friends,

Well, it's time for me to say goodbye – once again.

As I will be retiring this week, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to Secretary Raimondo and NOAA Administrator Spinrad for their trust and the incredible freedom they gave me to reimagine the Office of Space Commerce. I would also like to thank our many Congressional partners for their confidence and the resources necessary to sustain OSC and to start building the Traffic Coordination System for Space (TraCSS) program.

When I joined in the spring of 2022, the Office of Space Commerce had just three employees—at a time when the pro-industry mandate of the office had never been more critical. As I depart, the office has grown to nearly 60 people including civil servants, detailees and contractors. Today, this small but mighty team is building a world-class space traffic safety system, crafting an innovative and adaptable regulatory framework for remote sensing, and championing U.S. leadership and innovation in the global commercial space sector.

With respect to the TraCSS program, so many people in the Department of Commerce, NASA, and the Department of Defense have given freely of their time that it is not possible to thank them all. However, I want to especially acknowledge two extraordinary individuals—Sandy Magnus and Barbara Golf.

Although Sandy joined the team as Chief Engineer, she quickly became a team leader and key visionary for TraCSS. Barbara, leading the DoD team, demonstrated extraordinary skill in managing the incredibly complex process of getting two departments with wildly different cultures and objectives to quickly agree to a plan for transitioning a broad array of activities from DoD to DoC.

Finally, I would like to thank Don Graves, Deputy Secretary of Commerce, for his support and his vision that "the Department of Commerce is a space agency." Under his leadership, DOC achieved remarkable progress in a range of areas, including:

- Operating environmental satellites to protect the public and monitor Earth;
- Streamlining space regulations to support U.S. exports;
- Establishing a modern space traffic safety system;
- Initiating global dialogue on space traffic coordination;
- Encouraging international space business partnerships & trade;
- Advancing cybersecurity for space systems;
- Promoting technical standards for space development; and
- Fostering diversity and opportunity in the space industry.

My only regret is that I won't be here to witness the extraordinary contributions the Department of Commerce will make to space in the decade ahead.

Thank you all – *it has been a truly incredible journey.*



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Graves". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Don" being particularly prominent and stylized.

## **OSC's Top 2024 Highlights**

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### **Launched the Traffic Coordination System for Space**

In September, the Traffic Coordination System for Space (TraCSS) **launched initial capabilities** to support space safety and sustainability. TraCSS provides warning notifications for satellites potentially in danger of collision; its launch marked a milestone in the Department of Commerce's (DOC) work to take this mission over from the Department of Defense (DOD).

Development of the TraCSS program had accelerated considerably in 2024. The program received an "Authority to Proceed" from DOC in March, issued the **TraCSS System Integrator contract award** later that month, and achieved "Authority to Operate" with NOAA's Office of the Chief Information Officer in August. In November, NOAA awarded the **TraCSS Presentation Layer contract**, which will provide the TraCSS website and user experience - a key step in preparation for user migration onto the system. The award was protested through the GAO and the contract is on hold while NOAA works through the process to resolve the action.

### **Collaborated with stakeholders to inform TraCSS development**

Throughout 2024, OSC worked closely with the public and partners in the commercial sector to shape the TraCSS system. This included a series of **stakeholder listening sessions** to gather input and feedback on a number of TraCSS elements. OSC also convened an **Independent Review Board** to receive advice and feedback on TraCSS' development.

### **Completed the TraCSS Commercial Pathfinder**

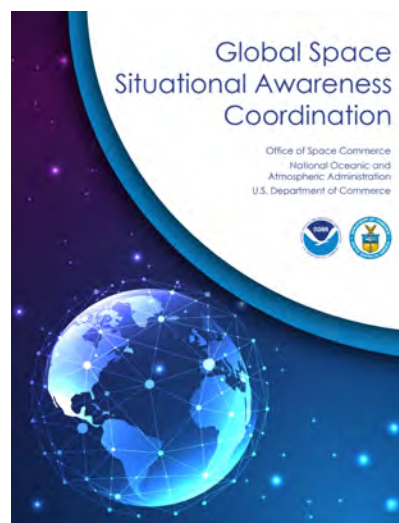
In 2024, OSC completed the **\$15.5 million Consolidated Pathfinder Project**, where it placed orders with five U.S. commercial SSA companies to assess industry capabilities in maintaining a space object catalog and tracking close approaches among LEO objects.

Additionally, OSC launched the **Improved Owner/Operator Ephemeris Pathfinder**, placing orders for generating satellite ephemerides and related data quality monitoring services. These efforts, part of a series of planned pathfinder projects, are crucial for the future buildout of the operational TraCSS.

The results of these initiatives were reported at the AMOS conference in Maui and the IAC in Milan, and are currently under evaluation to inform future developments in space traffic management. For more details, you can view the **full paper here**.

### **Initiated global dialogue on space situational awareness**

Space debris and collision avoidance are challenges for all spacecraft, regardless of their nation of registry. In April, OSC released its **Global Space Situational Awareness Coordination** document, outlining a vision for a future in which TraCSS is one of many national or regional SSA providers working in close coordination on a global level.



Practical next steps from this document were investigated in a **joint paper** between OSC's Traffic Coordination System for Space (TraCSS) and the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking (EU SST) comparing services. This collaboration represented a step toward greater transparency and identified next steps for international cooperation in space safety and sustainability.

### **Organized international space dialogues with U.S. industry**

In OCS's role as an industry advocate and convener within government, we participated in space dialogues and organized "Track 1.5" sessions that brought together representatives of participating national governments to hear insights and concerns from commercial industry.



Over the course of 2024, we held these with **France, Japan**, New Zealand, Germany, and Italy. Once considered novel in space diplomacy, these Track 1.5 discussions have grown in frequency and reinforced the importance of industry voices at the table.

### **Established & convened the Advisory Committee on Excellence in Space**

In March 2024, OSC **established the Advisory Committee on Excellence in Space (ACES)** to provide advice and recommendations on commercial space issues. **The committee membership**, chaired by Caryn Schenewerk with David Gauthier as vice chair, consists of a diverse group of space policy, engineering, technical, science, legal, and finance professionals.



On October 3, OSC **hosted the first public meeting** of ACES, which included discussions on space situational awareness, commercial space mission authorization, and remote sensing licensing.

### **Helped roll out updated space export controls**

In October 2024, the Office of Space Commerce (OSC) supported the government's rollout of **new space export control rules** by hosting public events and encouraging feedback from domestic and international audiences. The Departments of Commerce (DOC) and State rulemakings represent a concerted effort to strengthen international partnerships and empower U.S. innovators in the global space economy. On November 6, DOC hosted a public meeting to discuss the rules, featuring speakers from the National Space Council, State Department, DOC's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), and NASA.

### **Published compendium of space industry standards**

In 2024, OSC **published a compendium** of existing space industry technical standards to encourage economic growth and technological advancement of the U.S. commercial space industry. Many of these standards, coordinated with standards development organizations and government-led groups, are particularly focused on space situational awareness (SSA) data sharing and

coordination, which is essential to TraCSS. This [searchable spreadsheet](#) serves as a consolidated reference for space-related standards, best practices, reports, and other documents developed by organizations such as ISO, CCSDS, ASTM International, NIST, NASA, CONFERS, and AIAA.

## **Filled out the Leadership Team**

### Sarah Brothers, CRSRA Director

In January 2024, NOAA's Office of Space Commerce (OSC) announced the selection of [Sarah Brothers, Ph.D.](#), as Director of OSC's Commercial Remote Sensing Regulatory Affairs (CRSRA) Division. Dr. Brothers, an expert in remote sensing technologies, brings extensive experience in developing national space policies. Under her leadership, CRSRA has continued to streamline its regulatory framework, reducing the average time to issue a license from 48 days in 2020 to 14 days in 2023, and eliminating 69 restrictive operating conditions from 11 licenses.



CRSRA, which oversees 78 licensees with 1,386 satellites, plans to modernize its online licensing system and align with the White House's [United States Novel Space Activities Authorization and Supervision Framework](#). Dr. Brothers' appointment marks a significant step in advancing the U.S. commercial space sector.

### Dmitry Poisik, TraCSS Program Manager

In July 2024, the Office of Space Commerce (OSC) [appointed Dmitry Poisik](#) as the inaugural Program Manager for the Traffic Coordination System for Space (TraCSS). Poisik, a Navy veteran with over 30 years of experience in program and project management, brought a wealth of technical and leadership skills to the role. This appointment marked a significant step in OSC's efforts to develop TraCSS as a modern, cloud-based IT system that takes over responsibility from the Department of Defense for the provision of basic SSA data and STC services to commercial and civil space operators.



## **December 2024 Stakeholder Engagements**

### **OSC Joins UAE Trade Mission and Abu Dhabi Space Debate**

From December 9 - 11, OSC joined a Department of Commerce-certified trade mission of U.S. companies to the United Arab Emirates. Organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce with the International Trade Administration and U.S. Embassy, this was the largest space-focused trade mission ever.

The delegation and U.S. government participants met with a range of UAE ministries, toured and spoke with the UAE Space Agency and the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Center, and met with local space companies. As the UAE increases its investments in the space sector, this timely visit underscored increasing commercial alliances between the two countries.



During the trip, OSC's Gabriel Swiney and Mariel Borowitz participated in the **Abu Dhabi Space Debates**, organized by the UAE Government. They detailed OSC's work on space sustainability, space situational awareness (SSA), and "**Global Vision for SSA Coordination**."

Building on OSC's recent efforts with international partners, OSC is using these engagements to address critical issues of global coordination, communication, and standardization in SSA to promote space safety. Read more about the event on [OSC's website](#).

## **Across Commerce**

### **NOAA Releases Updated Guidance for Commercial Data Buys**

In December, NOAA released its ***Guidance for NOAA Commercial Data Buys: A Framework for NOAA Programs and Offices Conducting Commercial Data Buys***.



This document outlines how NOAA will collaborate with private sector providers, including through the Commercial Data Purchase (CDP) program, to enhance its ability to deliver reliable environmental intelligence, protect lives, and support the U.S. economy.

The guidance does not apply to NOAA's purchases of commercial space situational awareness (SSA) data.

The framework is intended to illustrate why and when buying commercial environmental data is in alignment with the NOAA mission. It prescribes several best practices, including:

- *Pilot Projects*: Testing new technologies and data sources through limited trials to assess their quality and impact.
- *Data Licensing*: Exploring flexible licensing options to balance public and private sector needs while maximizing NOAA's operational use.
- *Risk Assessment*: Identifying and mitigating risks related to supply chain, cybersecurity, and data reliability.
- *Cost-Effectiveness*: Comparing costs of commercial data against in-house or partner-generated alternatives to ensure economic efficiency.

By standardizing these practices, NOAA aims to create consistency and clarity in its interactions with commercial data providers. Learn more on the OSC website, [here](#).

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## **OSC is Hiring!**

Interested in joining the Office of Space Commerce? Check out the [job announcements page](#) on our website! Current open positions include:

Physical Science Technicians (Space Operations Division - five positions available)

- Grade: ZT-5 (GS-13 equivalent)
- USAJobs link: [UNSEC OSC-24-12527418-DE](#) (General public)
- USAJobs link: [UNSEC OSC-24-12527417-ST](#) (Status candidates)
- Closing date: September 11, 2025

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## **OSC in the News**

- *Innovation News Network*: [Fuelling the final frontier: How the US space economy is powering innovation and growth](#)
- *SpaceNews*: [The 2024 SpaceNews Icon Awards: Celebrating excellence in space](#)

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## **Looking Ahead**

OSC staff will be featured participants in these upcoming events:

**Jan 14:**     [245th American Astronomical Society Meeting](#) - National Harbor, MD

**Jan 31:**     International Space Resources Legal Workshop - Virtual

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## **Connect With Us!**

- **Website:** [space.commerce.gov](https://space.commerce.gov)
- **Contact Us:** [space.commerce.gov/contact-us](https://space.commerce.gov/contact-us)
- **TraCSS:** [space.commerce.gov/tracss](https://space.commerce.gov/tracss)
- **LinkedIn:** [Office of Space Commerce](#)
- **X:** [@CommerceinSpace](#)