

## Partnering With Industry Key to Future of Space

**P**ETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. (AFNS) – Because space is a vital national interest, partnering with commercial and civil agencies is critical if the United States is to reduce launch costs and stay competitive in the global space market.

Lt. Gen. Lance W. Lord, vice commander of Air Force Space Command, made that statement during his keynote address at the Federal Aviation Administration's two-day conference on commercial space transportation in Arlington, Va.

During the opening segment of "Commercial Space Transportation in the 21st Century: Technology and Environment, 2001-2025," the general said evolving space partnerships with other agencies – civil and commercial – will allow America to do far more with limited resources than could otherwise be accomplished.

Partnering with the commercial sector is of the utmost importance to both the military and civil sectors because of several trends impacting the U.S. military, civil, and commercial space sectors, said Lord.

The most significant trend is the overall drop in defense spending. According to the general, the military, civil, and commercial space sectors can partner together and leverage the dollars that are available.

Lord also noted a trend in the shifting of space leadership from government to industry. Over the past five decades, the military and NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] served as the catalyst driving the initial development of space. Just as commercial exploitation followed the military's use of the airplane, so goes the way of space systems, he said.

The general said he believes partnering with industry will help America retain a technological edge in the rapidly changing space arena, while preventing the rapid dissemination of key military-relevant technologies across the globe. These efforts will also lead to domination of the global space access market through a reduction of launch costs.

Space transportation today is similar to air transportation in the 1920s and 30s. As passenger flights became more routine, reliable, and safe, the number of flights rose and the cost per flight decreased. It is the old law of volume discounts. This is inevitable with space transportation also, he said.

**Editor's Note:** This news release, courtesy of the Air Force Space Command News Service, is in the public domain and may be accessed at <http://www.af.mil/news> on the World Wide Web.