



Draft Decadal Plan for Australian Space Science

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National Space Society of Australia

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**Steering Committee
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The National Space Society of Australia (NSSA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the *Draft Decadal Plan for Australian Space Science* as provided by the Steering Committee.

This Decadal Plan is the first step towards providing a sustainable and national approach to decision making around the space science community and the NSSA congratulates the Steering Committee for putting forward the first Decadal Plan. Furthermore, the NSSA supports the vision of the Plan, recognising that it provides consolidated direction for the space science community and endorse the five key imperatives outlined in the motivations.

The NSSA, established in 1987, is the largest not-for-profit space advocacy organisation in Australia. The mission of the NSSA is to promote changes in economic, social and technological policies in all sectors of government and industry to advance the day when Australia has a robust and competitive space industry which ultimately supports the day when people live and work in space. This is achieved in a number of avenues:

- > Holding the preeminent biennial space industry conference series: Australian Space Development Conference, now in its 18th year.
- > Bringing the Australian space science community together for the Australian Space Science Conference, now in its 8th year.
- > General public outreach activities including presentations and seminars.
- > Media engagement, linking the media with space experts to provide commentary on notable events.
- > Hosting networking opportunities by bringing together people from government, industry and academia for the free exchange of information.
- > Providing support to other space affiliates, including museums and educational facilities/activities.
- > Providing assistance to space education groups for school-aged children.
- > Creating opportunities for young professionals interested in space to engage with the space community.



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NSSA is part of an international organisation, National Space Society, with headquarters in Washington DC. Australian members join with over 30,000 members world wide to promote the mission and vision of the organisation.

To date, NSSA has sought active engagement with the space science community to ensure that that information is passed on to support robust decision-making.

In its submission to the Inquiry into Senate Economics Committee: *The Current State of Australia's Space Science and Industry Sector*, the NSSA stressed the need for national direction and the formation of a single agency for coordinating all space-related activities. This is applicable to the space science community and support the need for national coordination.

A central agency can furthermore be a focal point for all of Australia's space related capabilities, allowing the opportunity to expose all work being conducted in this area. Without the central point, organisations and people work in isolation, unaware of what others are doing which could greatly complement their work. The central point would also allow for Australia to have a unified voice in international activities and provide credibility to international organisations conducting business development ideas within Australia.

As the primary space advocacy organisation in Australia, the NSSA is the key conduit between the space community (including Government and business activities) and the broader public. As a result, the NSSA is in a unique position to highlight issues of concern and is the focal point for general public inquiries into space, including education, entrepreneurial ideas and information sharing.

The NSSA would like to highlight and support the following key points as outlined in the Draft Decadal Plan:

1. Space science is inspirational and well suited to education and training;
2. Australia has world-leading space scientists;
3. Space science in Australia has produced crucial discoveries for modern society;
4. Space science has strong national and international benefits for Australia;
5. Development of a national space agency;

The NSSA would like to point out that they are primarily focused for a nationally coordinated space agency and would recommend that the proposed 'Australian Coordination Committee for Space Science' falls under this national over-arching space agency. This is to allow for robust policy and decision making to be done with all sectors of the space industry.



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It should be pointed out that the NSSA is not a space science organisation and hence cannot provide detailed comment on the actual projects identified. However the NSSA supports the space science community in the development of a national Decadal Plan – as evidenced by the success of seven consecutive conferences and planning of the 8th Australian Space Science Conference.

If the steering committee has any further questions and comments, please forward it on to:

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