



Velocity Update

August 7, 2020

Congressional Schedule. The Senate has adjourned until Monday at 3 p.m. The House is scheduled to be out next week. Realistically, the leadership in both chambers have told Members to be ready to come back to Washington with 24-hour notice. (*More below.*)

U.S. Economic Outlook

Weekly numbers and long-term outlook. [1.19 million people filed for unemployment](#) benefits for the first time last week, which is a decrease from previous week's numbers. Another 656,000 people claimed Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the program for self-employed or gig workers, for the first time. On Friday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said that the national unemployment rate [fell to 10.2%](#), after adding 1.8 million jobs in July. It's good news, but it's also significantly fewer jobs than were added in June (4.8 million). There are other indications that the job market may continue to be sluggish. The data comes from early in July, and so does not reflect the impact of new job losses in states that are now implementing new restrictions following a spike in the number of new coronavirus cases. There are also indications that in some locations around the country, people are being laid off for the second time this year.

Coronavirus government operations update

National perspective. As of Friday afternoon, the number of confirmed cases in the U.S. [is at least 4,891,000 with at least 157,000 deaths](#). Earlier this week, Dr. Deborah Birx, the coronavirus response coordinator for the White House, [warned](#) that the virus is "extraordinarily widespread." She also stated that the national death toll could reach 300,000 by the end of the year if public behavior does not change. However, the news isn't all bad: rolling back reopening and changes in behavior are showing results (see [this graphic](#) for more data) with most states at least holding steady in the number of new cases. On Thursday, in advance of a visit from President Trump, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine [tested positive](#) for Covid-19, though later the same day, he took another test which returned a negative result.

Washington metro area. Overall coronavirus cases in [D.C., Maryland, and Virginia topped 204,000 by Friday afternoon, with at least 6,000 deaths](#). This week, Virginia launched a [contact tracing app](#) built by Apple and Google that will alert a user if they've been in proximity to someone who later tests positive for the virus. The app relies on Bluetooth signals instead of location data, and Virginia Governor Ralph Northam (D) emphasized that no personal information is saved.

Pentagon staff looks at starting to return to normal operations. The Pentagon has moved to Phase Two, which means a maximum of 80-percent of staff allowed on-site (up to 18,000 employees), though we have found that the actual number of staff on site are much lower. Offices have implemented social distancing, including limiting the number and size of meetings. There are also ongoing discussions within the different services regarding opportunities for employees to opt for a remote work environment. The granting of these requests will be dependent upon work responsibilities (i.e. customer service workers), and whether or not a person works in a classified environment.

NASA is still relying on mostly telework. As of July 21, all of NASA's facilities [were at Stage 3](#) of its pandemic response plan except for the Marshall Space Flight Center, which remains at Stage 4 (Stage 3 means

mandatory telework except for those needed for critical work for missions). For NASA HQ, which remains at Stage 3, what we're hearing is that most offices will continue to allow telework indefinitely.

The White House. The Executive Office of the President (e.g. OMB, National Security Council, National Space Council) remains open for business as usual. While many staff continue to telework, and then rotate into the office in shifts to handle classified materials, many staff are going physically back into the office on a regular basis. This week, [mandatory random testing of staff](#) was implemented across the White House campus. Random testing was already happening: this mandate is supposed to enforce staffers reporting for testing (which implies that some staff were not reporting for testing when selected before).

Access to Congress remains limited. Access to the congressional office buildings and capitol complex continues to be extremely limited, open only to Members, Congressional staff, and credentialed press. In the House, vote by proxy rules were extended and remain in effect, and many Members plan to remain outside D.C. until these expire (again). Per Office of the Attending Physician (OAP) guidelines, many offices continue to allow the vast majority of staff to telework. However, an increasing number of staff, especially at the committee and senior level, are coming into the Capitol complex – often in rotations – to support their bosses during this active legislative season.

Proxy voting in the House. House Republicans filed a lawsuit against Speaker Nancy Pelosi seeking to invalidate the proxy voting resolution that allowed members to cast votes without being physically present on the House floor. Thursday evening, that [lawsuit was dismissed by a federal judge](#) who said that House has “absolute immunity from civil suit” under the Speech or Debate Clause of the Constitution.

Two more members of Congress have tested positive. Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) and Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) were both diagnosed this week. Grijalva chaired a hearing attended by Rep. Louie Gohmert last week where the two sat next to each other, though it's unclear if that's where he may have caught virus. More Members are calling for mandatory testing for lawmakers, but both House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell continue to be resistant to requiring testing. “It's not up to Sen. McConnell and me. As far as I'm concerned, it's up to the Capitol physician,” Pelosi said. “There are about 20,000 people who make the Capitol run. And the Capitol physician has not said yet that he thinks we should be tested. But it's not just us, it's others as well.” Part of the issue is the [optics of requiring testing for Members](#) while staff and others who work on Capitol Hill aren't able to be tested as part of that process.

Congressional activities

The next pandemic relief package. If you think that the news after every meeting between congressional and White House negotiators on the next pandemic relief package is starting to sound like Groundhog Day (there have been 10 meetings over 11 days), you're not wrong. Every time negotiators meet, the only clear result is that everyone is [still far apart on critical issues](#), including the overall size of the spending package, how much in additional unemployment benefits to offer, whether or not to offer aid to states and cities, and other [provisions](#). “We're still a considerable amount apart,” said White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows after the more than three-hour meeting Thursday night with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

Friday afternoon, Pelosi said that during the meeting, [Democrats offered to reduce their \\$3.4 trillion price tag by \\$1 trillion](#) if Republicans would agree to raise their roughly \$1 trillion package by the same amount, effectively meeting in the middle. (Note: This “split the difference” tactic is often used on Capitol Hill in difficult spending negotiations.) The reduction in cost would come primarily from offering the relief programs over a shorter time

frame. When asked about that offer on Friday, Mnuchin told reporters, “That’s a non-starter.” Pelosi also said that she planned to make the same offer when the four negotiators meet next at [1 pm on Friday](#).

What happens next? It’s not clear. Republicans made the threat earlier this week that if a deal wasn’t made by Friday, they saw no point in continuing negotiations. However, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who has chosen not to take a role in the talks, said that he would [be keeping the Senate in session](#) “unless and until the Democrats demonstrate they will never let an agreement materialize.” The Senate has officially adjourned until Monday, but many Senators have headed home, saying they would only return to Washington if and when there is a vote on a final deal.

President Trump has said that he is ready to issue [executive orders](#) on unemployment insurance, school loans, renter protections from evictions, and a payroll tax cut. However, it’s not clear exactly what executive orders will be able to do or if the [orders themselves will be legal](#). (We expect that they will definitely be [challenged in court](#), especially the payroll tax cut.) Earlier this week, the White House was looking at whether it had the authority to move unspent money from the CARES Act around to provide states with additional money for unemployment benefits.

Schumer [said the President has two choices](#). “The first is to negotiate with Democrats; he knows Republicans can’t pass a bill, you probably can’t even get a majority of Republican senators to vote for any bill, let alone the House. The second choice is to try these executive orders, which will leave most people out, will not cover the broad expanse of what’s needed, will be litigated in court and be awkward and difficult to implement.” (As a reminder, at least 20 Republicans say they will not vote for any additional relief spending.)

And, late Friday afternoon, top administration officials said they will recommend President Trump move forward with executive orders to address the economic fallout from the coronavirus as negotiations on Capitol Hill collapsed. White House chief of staff Mark Meadows said: “In the meantime, we’re going to take executive orders, to try to alleviate some of the pain that people are experiencing.” Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said that he and Meadows “will recommend to the president based upon our lack of activity today to move forward with some executive orders. More [here](#).”

FY2021 NDAA. The next step for the NDAA is the conference committee to work out an agreement between the House and Senate versions of the bill. While informal pre-conference negotiations may start among the professional staff soon, we do not expect a formal conference process to commence until September, and a final conference measure is very likely to be delayed until after the 2020 election.

FY2021 Regular Appropriations. The House has completed work on 10 of the 12 FY2021 appropriations bills. The more controversial Legislative Branch and Homeland Security bills have been reported out of committee, but not yet passed on the House floor, and are likely to be held until after the election. The Senate has yet to schedule its appropriations markups. Given that the upper chamber has left town (except for the potential vote on a pandemic relief bill) it is likely that no markups will be scheduled until at least September. There are a few points of contention, including emergency spending for the coronavirus and police reform provisions. The conventional wisdom now is that there will be a continuing resolution for all appropriations that will keep things running until after the election. Whether or not there is an additional continuing resolution depends on what happens with the election. If the Senate and/or the White House change party hands, the Democratic House will most likely prefer to punt on spending bills until the new Congress is seated and new President is sworn in in January.

There is also some discussion about attaching a continuing resolution to the pandemic relief package, when that vote happens. If Congress chooses that path, they could potentially stay home in their districts until after the November election.

For those tracking the funding numbers, [here](#) is where we are on the programs you and we care most about. (Let us know what we are missing from this list and we will add it!)

FY2021 Intelligence Authorization. Last week, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) passed [its version](#) of the FY2021 Intelligence Authorization Act on a party-line vote. The House will now likely move to its intelligence bill to the floor as a standalone measure, whenever that chamber comes back to Washington. As a reminder, the Senate attached its FY2021 Intelligence Authorization Act ([S. 3905](#)) to that chamber's version of the FY2021 NDAA ([S. 4049](#)), which the Senate passed on the floor last month. The House also passed its version of the FY2021 NDAA ([H.R. 6395](#)) on the floor last month, meaning that when the two chambers go to conference to hammer out an NDAA compromise measure, they could opt to include the intelligence bill or leave it out.

NASA Authorization. The House Science Committee has not scheduled a time for consideration of the [NASA authorization bill](#). As a reminder, the Senate Commerce Committee marked up and reported out [its version of the bill](#) in November 2019.

Personnel changes

On Friday, President Trump nominated Air Force Lt. Gen. David "D.T." Thompson for promotion to the rank of general. If the promotion is confirmed by the Senate, Thompson will become the first-ever Vice Chief of Space Operations of the U.S. Space Force. In political appointee news, Steve Kitay, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, announced he was leaving the Pentagon for the private sector.

On Thursday, the SASC held a confirmation hearing for four senior Pentagon nominees: Jason Abend for inspector general (advance policy questions [here](#)); Bradley Hansell to be deputy under secretary of defense for intelligence and security (advance policy questions [here](#)); Lucas Polakowski to be assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical, and biological defense programs (advance policy questions [here](#)); and Louis Bremer to be assistant secretary of defense for special operations/low-intensity conflict (advance policy questions [here](#)).

The Senate has been pushing through confirmation votes and nomination hearings in order to work through a backlog before going on their August recess. On Tuesday, the Senate confirmed Mark Menezes as the deputy secretary of the Energy Department, Army LTG James Dickinson to be head of U.S. Space Command, and Air Force Lt. Gen. Glen D. VanHerck to be head of U.S. Northern Command. Other Space Force positions received confirmation votes yesterday: Maj. Gen. Nina M. Armagno will be CSO's director of staff; Maj. Gen. William J. Liquori Jr. will be CSO's deputy chief of space operations for strategy, plans, programs, requirements and analysis; Maj. Gen. Bradley C. Saltzman will be CSO's deputy chief of space operations, operations, cyber, and nuclear; and Maj. Gen. (now Lt. Gen.) Stephen N. Whiting was confirmed as commander, Space Operations Command, at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

Also on Tuesday, the Senate Armed Services Committee held nomination hearings for four other Pentagon positions, including Shon Manasco for undersecretary of the Air Force (advance policy questions [here](#)).

Last week, the SASC canceled the confirmation hearing for Anthony Tata, who was nominated by President Trump to be undersecretary of defense for policy. This week, the White House [withdrew Tata's nomination](#) and instead [named him as the acting deputy to the current acting undersecretary for policy](#), James Anderson. While

it is against the law to name someone who was nominated for a position as acting to that position, there's no rule about naming them as acting deputy to that position. And if he spends 90 days as "first assistant" to that position, he apparently can then be named as acting undersecretary without going through the confirmation process. This sidestep around the rules has angered Democratic senators, who are threatening to hold up Manasco's confirmation. Other Pentagon nominees may find opposition as well. For example, Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) [said](#) he "will almost certainly oppose nominees unless something is done to correct this situation."

Elsewhere in the government, on Wednesday, the inspector general for the State Department abruptly resigned. [Stephen Akard's last day is today](#). His deputy, Diana R. Shaw, told staff that Akard was planning to return home to Indiana to take a position with a law firm there, and that she will become the temporary acting inspector general. Akard had been on the job less than three months. He was named as IG after President Trump fired the previous IG Steve Linick, who was investigating the improper use of State Department resources by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his wife, and looking into the decision to expedite arms sales to Saudi Arabia over the objections of Congress.

And at the Department of Homeland Security, [Brian Murphy](#), the acting under secretary for the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis, has been removed from his position by acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf. News reports broke this week that Murphy's office compiled intelligence reports about journalists covering protests in Portland and sent them to federal law enforcement agencies, and then that the office also monitored protesters' electronic communications.

Outside the government, former acting Pentagon Comptroller [Elaine McCusker](#), who left the Pentagon in June, is joining the American Enterprise Institute as a resident fellow. And Peter Davidson, deputy dean for strategic initiatives and an assistant professor at George Mason University's law school, has been hired by Intelsat as vice president of global government affairs and policy.

National security update

Welcome to the new USAF Chief. Gen. Charles "CQ" Brown was ceremonially sworn in as the [new chief of staff](#) of the Air Force in a small [White House event](#) on Tuesday. Then, on Thursday, officially took over from retiring Air Force chief, Gen. David L. Goldfein at the [change of command ceremony](#) held at Joint Base Andrews, where he was sworn in by Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett. Brown is the first Black chief of a military service. He noted in his speech that it was the perseverance of others, including the Tuskegee Airmen and other African American leaders across the military, who served as an inspiration for him. "It is due to their trials and tribulations in breaking barriers that I can address you today as the Air Force chief of staff," Brown [said](#).

Farewell to Chief of Staff Goldfein. Gen. David L. Goldfein officially retired on Thursday. Before his retirement, Gen. Goldfein did a final interview Q&A with National Defense Magazine; you can read it [here](#).

Doubts still linger about Space Force. One of Goldfein's achievements is standing up the Space Force. However, not everyone is convinced that the new service will be successful in the end. Speaking to *The Washington Post* about his retirement, where she called Goldfein a friend and "remarkable human," former Air Force secretary Heather Wilson also [commented](#) on her worries about the future of the Space Force. "When it's a no longer a new, shiny thing, will it still be able to hold its own in a Pentagon bureaucratic fight as a service that is smaller than the Coast Guard?" she said. "It bothers me when people are always finding the joke in it. No military service should be made fun of, and I think you can probably see that. It's hard to maintain long-term."

AFRL and Space Force. As the Space Force continues to work out its structure and operations, other connected organizations are figuring out how they can best serve the Department of the Air Force as a whole. The [Air Force Research Laboratory](#), who supports customers on both the Air Force and Space Force sides of the house, is realigning to make sure that space-focused work is equally emphasized at the lab. Gen. Heather Pringle, who took command of AFRL in June, said that a new deputy technical executive officer will be responsible for integrating the space portfolio into the overall science and technology portfolio, and will report directly to her. Some AFRL personnel will become part of the Space Force and reassigned back to the lab. Pringle said that the Space Force “controls its own money, and has its own budget, and it will set its own priorities for the [science and technology] research that it requires. Our job will be to align our force to that and execute it.”

Space Development Agency. We mentioned last week that the Department of the Air Force is still finalizing its report to Congress on space acquisition. Shawn Barnes, deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force, spoke to reporters about that, but he also mentioned the timeline for moving the Space Development Agency (SDA) over to the Space Force. There’s been disagreement between SDA and Air Force leadership on that date, with SDA wanting to postpone it past the mandated October 2022, and Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett wanting it to happen sooner rather than later. [Barnes said](#) that he understands SDA’s position, “But I think there’s been a reasonable agreement that we’ve been looking at right around the beginning of fiscal year 2023.”

Events this week. The Aspen Security Forum happened this week. Defense Secretary Mark Esper spoke on Wednesday, and Michele Flournoy, the former undersecretary of defense for policy during the Obama Administration, spoke on Thursday. (Note: Many close to former Vice President Joe Biden’s campaign believe Flournoy to be a likely Secretary of Defense in a Biden Administration.) You can read notes from both those talks [here](#).

Civil and commercial update

Crew Dragon returns home. On Sunday, American astronauts returned on an American spacecraft to American soil – well, technically American water. NASA astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley [splashed down in the SpaceX Crew Dragon spacecraft](#) at 2:48 pm, landing about 70 kilometers south of Pensacola, Florida, in a picture-perfect event. The crew [praised the spacecraft](#), noting that it performed exactly as planned. One interesting footnote: Recovery boats reached the capsule minutes after the splashdown, but so did quite a few private boats. While the area was cleared by the U.S. Coast Guard before the landing, after the splashdown, the boats got uncomfortably close to the site (and the toxic chemical nitrogen tetroxide venting off the spacecraft), forming a semicircle around the capsule clearly visible in photos and video.

Hurricane season update. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released its revised outlook for the current Atlantic hurricane season predicting that the current record-breaking season is likely to be even more active before the end of the season on Nov. 30. National Weather Service director Louis Uccellini told reporters that this is one of the most active hurricane outlooks NOAA has ever issued. The revised outlook calls for a total of 19 to 25 named storms, of which 7 to 11 are expected to become hurricanes, and 3 to 6 of those could become major hurricanes. The tally includes the nine named Atlantic storms to date this year, including two Category 1 hurricanes to make landfall in the U.S. (which already include records for some of the earliest named storms in a season). (Over in the Pacific, Hawaii has seen one category 1 hurricane so far in the Pacific season, though the storm didn’t make landfall on any of the Hawaiian Islands.)

SpaceX Starship “hops” in Texas. On Wednesday, SpaceX [tested its prototype](#) for a next-generation reusable launch vehicle. The vehicle flew vertically, then performed a 45-second “hop” sideways, landing on a nearby

pad. Starship is part of SpaceX's plan for a Mars journey. This test marks the first successful test; four other prototypes have been destroyed in early tests.

Virgin Galactic delays commercial flights. Virgin Galactic is pushing their [first commercial flights](#) for SpaceShipTwo to no earlier than the first quarter of 2021. The company plans to fly two more powered test flights. If those flights go well, Richard Branson would be on the third powered flight, which would mark the beginning of their commercial service.

Events this week. The SmallSat conference was held virtually this week. NRO director Chris Scolese gave the keynote. (See our notes from his speech and other discussions [here](#)). Space News hosted an event to discuss how smallsats might be used in future architectures (see our notes [here](#)). For more news coverage of the event, go [here](#).

2020 Election update

It's less than 100 days to the election (87 days to be exact) and the final campaign push is beginning. We know you're getting inundated with election and campaign news, so we're going to stick to the highlights and critical points for the next 12 and half weeks. Here's what you need to know this week.

Is it a convention if no one ... convenes? *The Democratic Convention* begins on August 17. Nominee Joe Biden will not travel to Milwaukee for the convention, but instead giving his acceptance speech from Delaware. The Democratic convention is expected to be entirely virtual with no one traveling from out of state to participate in events. The biggest box to check before the convention is the announcement of Biden's choice for running mate, which we expect no later than the end of next week. *The Republican Convention* is scheduled to begin on August 24. There are few details about the public, virtual part of the convention, including where President Trump will give his acceptance speech for the nomination. He suggested this week that he would speak [from the South Lawn](#) of the White House, an action that could possibly be in violation of the Hatch Act (which prevents federal employees from campaigning while on federal property) for the federal employees who would be required to support and attend the speech. Both Democrats and Republicans have pushed back against this plan, with Republican Senator [John Thune noting](#) when asked by reporters: "Is that even legal? I assume that's not something that you could do. I assume there's some Hatch Act issues or something. I don't know the answer to that and I haven't heard him say that, but I think anything to do with federal property would seem to me to be problematic." One thing we do know about the Republican convention is that [media will not be allowed to be in the room when the delegates vote](#) on the nominee.

Debates. We mentioned last week that all three agreed upon scheduled [debates](#) would take place after the start of early or absentee voting in some states. The Trump campaign apparently has been thinking the same thing. This week, the campaign requested an additional, fourth presidential debate to be held in early September. On Thursday, the Commission on Presidential Debates [officially declined that request](#), noting in a letter that, "There is a difference between ballots having been issued by a state and those ballots having been cast by voters, who are under no compulsion to return their ballots before the Debates. In 2016, when the debate schedule was similar, only 0.0069% of the electorate had voted at the time of the first debate."

Polls. Keep in mind there is a lot of runway before election day, and at this time in July of 2016, Hillary Clinton held a [double-digit lead over Trump](#). The latest round of polls [show](#) President Trump is trailing in several key battleground states, and Democrats are ahead or running even in several critical Senate races. In North Carolina, for example, elections officials will start sending ballots to voters on Sept. 4. Because of the greater expected emphasis on mail-in voting this year, the [timeline to move the needle is compressed](#) and it's going to be harder for any campaign that's trailing to play catch up. Many voters are choosing to wait until election day to choose

a candidate, because they have either not made up their minds, or their desire to hold a candidate's feet to the fire.

Possible Biden team. The most attention may be on who Joe Biden will choose as his running mate, but there's also a great deal of speculation on [who will play roles](#) in a Biden administration, and on what Biden's domestic and [foreign policy](#) would look like. For example, there's continued speculation that there would be budget cuts for the military and a shift to domestic programs, especially in light of significant 2020 spending on the coronavirus pandemic.

Change is inevitable. Regardless of whether the White House changes hands, there will be some new faces on Capitol Hill and throughout the federal government come January. There will be [new Members of Congress](#) and new congressional staffers, and there is usually a fair amount of changeover with administration appointees, even if President Trump wins reelection. No matter what happens in the White House, there are likely to be [changes in Senate leadership](#), even if the Senate stays in Republican control. With only five months between now and January 3 (when a new Congress is seated), now is the time to prepare for this transition.

Podcasts we love

CSIS is looking at what to expect as the economy reopens following the pandemic with its podcast [The Reopening](#). This week, they spoke with Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA), who talks about the impact of the pandemic on future budgets, and defense spending in particular.

And now for some lighter news...

If you love the book *Goodnight Moon*, there's a new parody being published in early October that speaks to our new normal. "Good Morning Zoom" is meant for both parents and kids, and [author Lindsay Rechler said](#) that she hopes the book will provide hope. Profits from the book will be donated to coronavirus relief charities.

Upcoming conferences and other events of interest

Cancellations: The Space Frontier Foundation New Space 2020 conference has been postponed indefinitely. And, the Women in Aerospace Awards Dinner scheduled for Oct. 15 has been canceled. The award winners will be announced later this summer and honored throughout the year.

- 8/12, 1pm, On Orbit, Off Campus: a Virtual Primer in On-Orbit Services, hosted by Astroscale and Secure World Foundation (registration and details [here](#))
- 8/12, 1pm, Linking Land, Air, Sea and Space, webinar sponsored by Defense One (registration [here](#))
- 8/18, 1pm, Maryland Space Business Roundtable with Dennis Andrucyk, Goddard Space Flight Center Director (watch [here](#))
- 8/18, 2pm, Next in Flight: The Future of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Operations, webinar sponsored by Defense One (more info [here](#))
- 8/19 to 8/21, NDIA Space Warfighting Industry Forum, Colorado Springs (details and registration [here](#))
- 8/20, 1 pm, NOAA's Future Satellite Architecture webinar, hosted by Space News
- 8/24, noon, SSPI Mid-Atlantic Golf Tournament (more info [here](#))
- 9/1 to 9/2, Big Data for Intelligence Symposium, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))
- 9/10 to 9/11, Secure World Foundation's 2nd Summit for Space Sustainability, Washington DC (register [here](#), rescheduled from June)
- 9/13 to 9/15, Cipher Brief Threat Conference, Sea Island GA (more info and registration [here](#))
- 9/14 to 9/16, AFA's Air, Space, Cyber All Virtual Conference (more info and registration [here](#))
- 9/23 to 9/24, Smallsat & Space Access Summit, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))
- 9/29 to 9/30, Autonomous Capabilities for DoD Summit, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))
- 10/6, 15th annual Future Leaders Celebration, Space & Satellite Professionals International (more info [here](#))

- 10/6 to 10/7, Stanford•NVCA Venture Capital Symposium (more info and registration [here](#))
- 10/26 to 10/28, [2020 AMS Washington Forum](#) (live virtual format)
- 10/31 to 11/3, Space Foundation's Space Symposium, Colorado Springs, CO ([agenda](#) and [Space Symposium's homepage](#))
- 11/16 to 11/19, Ascend, hosted by AIAA (live virtual format, more info [here](#))
- 12/2 to 12/3, Space Resiliency Summit, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))

What we're reading

July 28, *Breaking Defense*: [AF Will Choose Skyborg Prototypes This Summer](#)

July 29, *National Defense Magazine*: [Air Force Eyes New Industrial Base Model](#)

July 29, *Aviation Week*: [Webinar: Top Defense Aircraft Competitions](#)

July 31, *Breaking Defense*: [Despite COVID-19, Space Launch Numbers Holding Steady](#)

July 31, *National Defense Magazine*: [Army Examining Basing Options for New Weapons in Indo-Pacific](#)

July 31, *Air Force Magazine*: [Russia Claims Another USAF Intercept Over the Black Sea](#)

July 31, *Defense One*: [The Air Force's Latest GPS Alternative: Earth's Magnetic Fields](#)

July 31, *Air Force Magazine*: [Experimental Satellite Design Ready to Build](#)

July 31, *Via Satellite*: [Rocket Lab Targets August Return to Flight After Launch Failure](#)

Aug. 1, *The Washington Post*: [Alexander Vindman: Coming forward ended my career. I still believe doing what's right matters.](#)

Aug. 1, *Defense News*: [US Strategic Command now analyzes daily deterrence risks for all combatant commands](#)

Aug. 3, *The Washington Post*: [NASA is on an epic roll. But can it keep the momentum going?](#)

Aug. 3, *CNBC*: [Virgin Galactic partners with Rolls-Royce as it looks to build an aircraft for supersonic air travel](#)

Aug. 3, *Space News*: [U.S. Army expanding space education programs at West Point](#)

Aug. 3, *Space News*: [White House withdraws nomination of FCC commissioner O'Rielly](#)

Aug. 3, *Defense News*: [Lockheed dives into next-generation missile defense interceptor competition](#)

Aug. 3, *Air Force Magazine*: [Air Force to Continue 'Zero-Based' Budget Reviews](#)

Aug. 3, *Via Satellite*: [Arianespace Sends Ariane 5 Rocket Back to Hangar for Sensor Replacement](#)

Aug. 3, *USNI News*: [Army Keying in on Anti-Ship, Hypersonic Weapons for 'All Domain' Pacific Fight](#)

Aug. 3, *War on the Rocks*: [NATO's Return to Space](#)

Aug. 3, *National Defense Magazine*: [Industry Partnerships Key for Space Superiority](#)

Aug. 3, *Wall Street Journal*: [Five China Questions for Candidate Biden](#)

Aug. 3, *The Washington Post*: [Defense contractor with billions in sales got millions in pandemic loans intended for small businesses](#)

Aug. 3, *Politico*: [Trump extends National Guard virus mission through 2020 but cuts federal funds by quarter](#)

Aug. 3, *Defense News*: [Washington isn't listening to the Air Force and Space Force](#)

Aug. 4, *The Drive*: [Army Shows First-Ever Footage Of New Hypersonic Missile In Flight And Impacting](#)

Aug. 4, *Breaking Defense*: [Army IBCS Critical To JADC2: STRATCOM's Adm. Richard](#)

Aug. 4, *C4ISRNet*: [The Air Force's experimental navigation satellite cleared for fabrication](#)

Aug. 4, *Space News*: [Small launch industry sees pandemic, government affecting market](#)

Aug. 4, *Military Times*: [Supreme Court won't halt challenged border wall projects that use DoD funds](#)

Aug. 4, *Breaking Defense*: [NRO Taps AI For Future 'Hybrid Architecture'](#)

Aug. 4, *Space News*: [New NASA office coordinates rideshare launches of smallsat science missions](#)

Aug. 4, *Politico*: [Trump spares only Texas and Florida in cutting funds for National Guard](#)

Aug. 4, *Military Times*: [With the Germany withdrawal, Poland is set to be hosting a lot more US troops](#)

Aug. 4, *Defense News*: [MDA pauses defensive hypersonic missile design to refocus plan](#)

Aug. 4, *CNN*: [Why do we still have The Bomb?](#)

Aug. 4, *Breaking Defense*: [Troops To Test AFRL's THOR Drone Killer This Fall](#)

Aug. 4, *Defense News*: [To keep weapon sales in place, US offers new options for payment](#)
Aug. 4, *The Hill*: [Senate Intel panel approves final Russia report, moves toward public release](#)
Aug. 4, *Space News*: [DoD space agency's programs don't have to be perfect but have to be fast](#)
Aug. 4, *National Defense*: [Big Money for Next-Gen Munitions](#)
Aug. 4, *Federal Times*: [Even as agencies open offices, telework deployment for secure workforces should still be a priority](#)
Aug. 5, *Axios*: [The U.S. is at risk of attacks in space](#)
Aug. 5, *Breaking Defense*: [AFRL's First WARTECH Summit To Vet Cutting-Edge Tech](#)
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