



Velocity Update

August 28, 2020

The Velocity Update is taking a short vacation next week. There will be no update next Friday. Have a fun and safe Labor Day weekend and we'll see you again on Friday, Sept. 11.



Sunset in Duck, NC – Erin's office away from home this week & next

Congressional Schedule. The Senate is in recess until Sept. 8. The House returns on Sept. 14. *(More below.)*

Hurricane Laura. The seventh named storm to hit the continental U.S. and the strongest hurricane in over a century to hit Louisiana made landfall at 1 am on Thursday morning in Cameron, Louisiana. When the eye crossed the coast, Laura was a strong Category 4 storm with winds of 150 mph. The storm's path will take it directly over Shreveport, Louisiana, and Little Rock, Arkansas, then up through the Tennessee Valley and eventually into the Mid-Atlantic. Barksdale, AFB - which hosts 8th Air Force, Global Strike Command, and about half the Air Force's B-52H force – in northwest Louisiana prepared for Hurricane Laura by [evacuating their bombers ahead of the storm](#). In the National Capital Region, the remnants of Laura are forecasted to bring thunderstorms on Saturday afternoon.

U.S. Economic Outlook

Weekly numbers and long-term outlook. [One million people applied for unemployment](#) benefits for the first-time last week, and another 607,806 people claimed Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, the program for self-employed or gig workers, for the first time. 27 million people are currently receiving some form of unemployment insurance. On Thursday morning, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell announced that the [Fed is shifting the way it views the balance between inflation and the labor market](#). Before, if inflation went over 2-percent, the Fed would raise rates. Now, they plan to use average inflation targeting, which means going over the 2-percent target is acceptable to balance out periods where the inflation rate was below 2-percent. Small businesses are now expecting a longer time for recovery, but also a milder overall impact, [according to data](#) from the Census Bureau Small Business Pulse survey. Consumers also see the economy weakening: consumer confidence [fell by almost 7 points](#), dropping for the second month in a row.

Coronavirus government operations update

National perspective. As of Friday morning, the number of confirmed cases in the U.S. [is at least 5,868,205 with at least 178,000 deaths](#). On Monday, the CDC abruptly changed its guidance to say that people who have

been in close contact with someone infected with the coronavirus do not necessarily need to be tested for the virus if they are asymptomatic. Public health experts expressed concern and confusion at the change, because the data shows that asymptomatic people do spread the virus and robust testing is necessary for contact tracing and to prevent the spread of the virus. (Researchers say that asymptomatic spread may account for 30-50 percent of infected people). And Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who has been increasingly cut out of White House action on the pandemic, [said that he was having throat surgery and under anesthesia](#) at the time the CDC met to discuss changing the guidance, and didn't play any role in the deliberation. On Thursday, after public pressure, the director of the CDC seemed to [walk back the new guidance](#) by stating that anyone who comes into contact with confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients could be tested themselves, even if they are asymptomatic.

Washington metro area. Overall coronavirus cases in [D.C., Maryland, and Virginia topped 238,000 by Friday night, with at least 6,000 deaths](#). Arlington County, Virginia, is [planning to enforce social distancing](#) measures by issuing fines to people who ignore the county ordinance prohibiting more than three people from gathering in certain places, like sidewalks outside bars and restaurants. While signs and decals clearly mark where people should stand, and many places have someone outside to monitor lines, the Arlington Police Department said, "We have seen quite a bit of defiance and hostility toward security officers just being flat-out ignored." On Thursday, Maryland Republican Governor Larry Hogan released new coronavirus [metrics](#) that he said would allow all school systems to reopen their doors to students.

Pentagon still in Phase Two operations. The Pentagon is in Phase Two (Bravo), which means a maximum of 80-percent of staff allowed on-site (up to 18,000 employees), though the actual number of staff on site tends to be 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.

NASA is still relying on mostly telework. All of NASA's facilities are at Stage 3 of its pandemic response plan. (Stage 3 means mandatory telework except for those needed for critical work for missions). For NASA Headquarters, what we're hearing is that most offices will continue to allow telework indefinitely. NASA's Johnson Space Center [closed earlier this week](#) to all but essential personnel due to hurricane Laura. Space station control activities were shifted from JSC to the Marshall Space Flight Center and NASA's Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility in northeast Texas.

The White House. The Executive Office of the President (e.g. OMB, National Security Council, National Space Council) remains open for business, almost 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. Mask wearing and temperature checks are not comprehensively required.

Access to Congress remains limited. Access to the congressional office buildings and capitol complex continues to be extremely limited, open only to open to Members, Congressional staff, and credentialed press. Per Office of the Attending Physician (OAP) guidelines, many offices continue to encourage 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.

Congressional activities

The leadership races are on. Even though Congress is in recess, there's still a lot happening on the Hill. Members are already looking forward to the next Congress, particularly to potential leadership positions.

Assuming that the Democrats maintain control of the House, and assuming there aren't any other changes in leadership, the only open spot is that of assistant speaker (the fourth-ranked leadership position). The race to fill that position has at least [three people](#): Rep. Tony Cárdenas (D-CA), who is campaigning publicly, and Reps. David Cicilline (D-RI) and Katherine Clark (D-MA), who both appear to be campaigning somewhat privately, so far.

National Guard assistance with the pandemic. On Monday, Rep. Cheri Bustos (D-IL) [introduced a bill](#) that would require the administration to cover the full cost of National Guard deployments across the U.S. for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic. Nineteen House Democrats have signed onto the bill; no Republicans are supporting the legislation. Bustos introduced the legislation after federal funding for pandemic relief work being done by the Guard was cut in 44 states and territories. Only five states – Texas, Florida, Arizona, California and Connecticut – are continuing to receive full funding.

Upcoming hearing. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin is scheduled to testify next Tuesday, September 1, to the Select Committee on the Coronavirus Crisis. The committee, which is chaired by House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn, is tasked with overseeing the billions of dollars in coronavirus relief funds that Congress appropriated to ensure there is no waste, fraud, or abuse.

The next pandemic relief package. After some pessimistic talk at the beginning of the week, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows reportedly had a 25-minute phone call Thursday afternoon to [restart negotiations](#) on the next pandemic relief package. However, it appears that the call was a repeat of previous talks: Pelosi offered to meet in the middle for a \$2.2 trillion package (which is lower than the \$2.4 trillion the Democrats were proposing earlier this month), but the White House said no deal. The White House is pushing for a [skinny bill proposed](#) by Republicans last week, though it's not clear that bill would pass with complete Republican support since at least 20 Republican senators have stated they will not vote for any relief legislation. President Trump's [executive actions](#) have not had the desired effect, as many states have said they do not have the funds for matching enhanced unemployment benefits as required by the executive order, and about 20 states have noted they need more time to set up the new system. It's possible that Congress will attach pandemic relief funds to the next appropriations bills to move (most likely, a continuing resolution to keep the government running past the end of the fiscal year).

FY2021 NDAA. The next step for the NDAA is for the conference committee to work out an agreement between the House and Senate versions of the bill. Neither chamber has named their conference negotiators yet, though informal discussions among professional staff has very likely already begun at a low level. The formal negotiation process will likely not start until sometime in September, and a final conference measure is very likely to be delayed until after the 2020 election, into the lame duck session. This week, The Heritage Foundation released a report with their thoughts as the legislation proceeds into conference: [read the report here](#).

FY2021 Regular Appropriations. As we mentioned last week, we expect that the next step for spending bills will be a continuing resolution to keep the government running from after the end of the fiscal year until early to mid-November, when the lame duck Congress will convene post-election. While a continuing resolution (CR) past September 30 has long been expected, more recently we have begun to hear speculation that a longer term CR – possibly into March 2021 – may soon be on the table for discussion. Senator Leahy, Vice Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, [said](#) earlier this week, “If we have to have a continuing resolution, one to March would be best.” And, Congressional Quarterly also reported: “Observers of the process are already speculating Speaker Nancy Pelosi is laying plans for a March CR when lawmakers return after Labor Day. But her staff isn't discussing it and final decisions don't need to be made until probably the second week in September.”

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. We expect the House to move its intelligence bill to the floor as a standalone measure in September. We do not expect many amendments to be considered when the bill comes to a floor, and it is very possible that the two chambers could opt to include the intelligence bill as an addendum to the conference legislation for the NDAA.

NASA Authorization. As a reminder, the House space subcommittee passed its version of the [NASA authorization bill](#) back in January, but has not yet scheduled a time for a full committee markup. The Senate Commerce Committee marked up and reported out [its version of the bill](#) in November 2019, and may still try to schedule floor time to pass the bill through the full Senate sometime this fall. While we are still pessimistic about the likelihood of enactment before the end of 2020, we are starting to hear a few rumblings – including [this interview](#) with Mike French, vice president of space systems at the Aerospace Industries Association – that staffers are cautiously optimistic lawmakers will see more movement on the legislation before the end of 2020.

Personnel changes

The Government Accountability Office released a report earlier this month stating that the appointments of Chad Wolf and Ken Cuccinelli, who currently occupy the top two leadership spots in the Department of Homeland Security, are invalid because the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998 was not followed. President Trump announced this week that he will [formally nominate Chad Wolf](#) to fill the post of Secretary of Homeland Security. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), chair of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, said that he plans to hold a nomination hearing, but it's unclear if the Senate will act on the nomination before the November election given that the Senate plans to be in session for only a few weeks in September.

Charlie Summers, the principal deputy assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs since May 2019, is leaving the Pentagon on Sept. 14. He served as the acting assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs from January to May 2019, following the departure of former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and his top spokesperson, Dana White. His departure marks another in a growing line of senior officials leaving the Pentagon.

Meghan Biery has been named senior foreign policy adviser in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Most recently, Biery was director for strategic trade and nonproliferation at the National Security Council.

Alexandra Seymour, who was a special assistant in the Office of Strategic Communications at the NSC, is now a speechwriter to the deputy secretary of defense.

Adam Trull will soon start as a new majority professional staff member on the Strategic Forces Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He comes to the committee from the Pentagon, where he spent almost a decade on various international and nuclear/nonproliferation issues, most recently as Acting Principal Director, Nuclear Matters.

National security update

Nuclear news. The Congressional Budget Office released an assessment this week about the costs associated with allowing the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) to end. In short, the report finds a range of potential costs, depending on whether the U.S. and Russia maintain current levels of nuclear forces or use the

end of the treaty as an opportunity to increase their nuclear stockpile. A CBO summary of the report says, “If the New START treaty expired, the United States could choose to make no changes to its current plans for nuclear forces, in which case it would incur no additional costs. If the United States chose to increase its forces in response to the expiration of the treaty, modest expansions could be relatively inexpensive and could be done quickly. Larger expansions could be quite costly, however, and could take several decades to accomplish.” If the U.S. chooses to expand its nuclear capability, the one-time costs in the report range [from \\$100 million to \\$439 billion](#) depending on the number of warheads and delivery systems DoD chooses to build. You can read the full report [here](#).

One of the provisions to be resolved in the NDAA conference is on the role the Pentagon should play in the development of the National Nuclear Security Administration’s annual budget. The NNSA is under the Department of Energy. A proposal in the Senate version of the NDAA would give the Pentagon-led Nuclear Weapons Council the authority to edit the NNSA budget. The House version of the bill, though, would make the secretaries of defense and energy co-chairs of the Nuclear Weapons Council (as opposed to the current set up with the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, and the NNSA administrator). The House also passed an appropriations bill with language that would prohibit DoD coordination on the NNSA budget within the Nuclear Weapons Council. While the White House threatened to veto the bill based, in part, on that provision last month, the administration is now taking a position that seems to say they don’t support either position. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans, and Capabilities Vic Mercado supported the status quo, [telling reporters](#) that change is unneeded. “I think right now we have it about right,” Mercado said

Update to Unified Command Plan. According to DoD officials, a [new draft of the Unified Command Plan](#) is ready for the review of Joint Chiefs Chair Gen. Mark Milley. The UCP is generally updated after a new command is formed. Army Gen. Tim Lawson, acting SPACECOM deputy offered some of the changes to the document to Breaking Defense: “We’ll very shortly be picking up some responsibilities for global responsibilities, such as global sensor manager and global satcom bandwidth manager.” The draft goes to Secretary Esper next, then to President Trump for his signature.

Department of the Air Force Annual Report on Space Command and Control Program. Secretary of the Air Force Barbara Barrett publicly released the draft acquisition strategy for the [Space Command and Control program](#), also known as Kobayashi Maru. The program represents a change in the way the Space and Missile System Center (SMC) acquires software to provide space domain awareness and Battle Management C2 mission capabilities.

Learning to write in pencil for technology acquisition. On Tuesday, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Will Roper held a [virtual “ask me anything.”](#) One topic he discussed was the need for flexible planning for new weapons systems. He noted that because technology evolves rapidly, acquisition plans can’t be written in stone. “Ultimately, are we OK writing things in pencil in this building?” Roper asked. “... If the answer is a tablet of stone, we’re going to continue communicating the way the Flintstones did.” Roper also said, “The building we’re sitting in is asking us for a five-year baseline. Does anyone think they know what technology will be available in their personal lives in 2025? ... It’s crazy to think about traditional acquisition being applied to something that can evolve as quickly and organically as the internet.” Roper specifically mentioned the Advanced Battle Management System, saying that another one of its challenges is how DoD traditionally approaches information technology and noting the need for greater connectivity. He also said that the ABMS demo will include experiments with 5G mobile networking. The ABMS “On Ramp” demonstration will be held from Aug. 31 to Sept. 5.

Captain or Colonel? Captain Kirk is speaking up in favor of space captains everywhere, and for the idea of using Navy ranks in the new Space Force. [Shatner lists](#) all the notable fictional space captains, noting the

infamous fictional colonels and majors, all as justification for a Navy-style rank structure. (A bit of fact-checking: Captain America was an Army man and Captain Marvel was an Air Force major, so maybe taking direction from fictional characters isn't always useful. Also, I'm sure Colonel Jack O'Neill and Captain (then major and eventually colonel) Samantha Carter from Stargate would have a bone to pick with his assessment of colonels and non-Navy ranks. Perhaps the best solution would be to follow Battlestar Galactica protocol and mix up rank structures. Okay, sci-fi geek moment over.) It is a [serious conversation](#), though, since the House version of the NDAA includes a provision that the Space Force use the Navy's rank structure, and the [new service is waiting](#) on that deliberation to play out before announcing its enlisted ranks and chevron designs. And there is a public perception issue – while having different ranks than the USAF would set it apart, using Navy ranks would imply the use of ships and personnel in space, something the USSF doesn't have and doesn't plan to have, at least in the near term. The Space Force isn't [commenting](#) on Shatner's opinions, since it's policy not to comment on proposed legislation. One thing we do know, the Operational Camouflage Pattern uniform is the [Space Force's duty uniform](#). Instead of the brown embroidery on Air Force uniforms, Space Force name and service tapes will employ space blue embroidery.

Get ready for the next Space Pitch Day. The Space and Missile Systems Center announced it will host a Space Pitch Day in spring 2021. The event is tentatively scheduled to be held in Los Angeles, but that may change to a virtual format. The event offers entrepreneurial companies the opportunity to pitch their ideas to a team of Air and Space Force officials and commercial investors. Companies may be awarded an on-the-spot contract if their pitch is well-received.

Events this week. On Wednesday, the Atlantic Council hosted a discussion on U.S. Defense Strategy and Posture for an Era of Great Power Competition, featuring former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Michèle Flournoy, and Congressman Michael Turner of Ohio (read our notes from the event [here](#)). On Thursday, the Mitchell Institute and the Advanced Nuclear Weapons Alliance Deterrence Center hosted a nuclear nonproliferation forum (find our summary [here](#)).

Civil and commercial update

New crewmember for Starliner-1. NASA announced this week that Jeanette Epps has been assigned to the crew for the first operational Boeing CST-100 Starliner mission to the International Space Station. This will be Epps first space flight; she was originally assigned to the ISS Expeditions 56 and 57 crew, but was pulled from the crew with her backup replacing her on the mission. NASA didn't offer an explanation for the crew swap at the time. Currently, Starliner-1 is planned to launch sometime in 2021.

Protecting astronomy from the effects of large satellite constellations. The American Astronomical Society and the National Science Foundation's National Optical-Infrared Astronomy Research Laboratory [released a report this week](#) that offers recommendations to satellite companies on how to reduce the effects of megaconstellations on ground-based astronomy. It also makes recommendations to astronomers on how to avoid satellites during observations. Another recommendation was that astronomers and satellite operators share data, including accurate satellite positions and brightness observations. You can read the report [here](#).

2020 Election update

It's 66 days to the election and the final campaign push is beginning. We know you're getting inundated with election and campaign news, so here's the bottom line on what you need to know this week.

Convention update. The *Republican Convention* was held this week. In advance of the convention kickoff, President Trump's campaign released a list of 50 goals for a second term. Normally, each party adopts a party

platform at the convention, however, this year the GOP decided to skip a new platform and instead [passed a resolution](#) to “enthusiastically support” President Trump’s “America-first” agenda and “reject the policy positions of the Obama-Biden administration.”

The convention also generated controversy over the use of government buildings in a political campaign, and also over the participation of senior Trump administration officials in the campaign event. Secretary of State [Mike Pompeo delivered a speech](#) to the convention from Jerusalem. As a result, the House Foreign Affairs Committee’s Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee is now [opening an investigation](#) into whether the speech broke any rules, since the secretary was on travel for official government business while he gave the speech.

Day 1: Monday, “*Land of Promise*”: Speakers on Monday include South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, Louisiana Rep. Steve Scalise, former Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley and Donald Trump Jr. During the day, nearly 400 delegates convened in Charlotte, conducted the roll-call vote and formally re-nominated President Trump and Vice President Pence for the Republican Party’s presidential ticket.

Day 2: Tuesday, “*Land of Opportunity*”: First lady Melania Trump spoke, along with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo from Jerusalem, Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds and Eric and Tiffany Trump.

Day 3: Wednesday, “*Land of Heroes*”: Vice President Pence spoke from Baltimore at Fort McHenry. Second lady Karen Pence also provided pre-recorded remarks focused on military spouses. Additional senior-level speakers this night include Tennessee Sen. Marsha Blackburn, Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem, Texas Rep. Dan Crenshaw and Madison Cawthorn, a 25-year old candidate for the North Carolina congressional seat vacated by Trump’s chief of staff, Mark Meadows.

Day 4: Thursday, “*Land of Greatness*”: President Trump delivered his acceptance speech from the White House. You can read the full transcript of the speech [here](#). The president touched upon his administration’s effort to rebuild the military, three pay raises for the active duty service members, and the stand-up of the Space Force. After the speech there was a firework display on the National Mall near the Washington Monument. Additional senior-level speakers included Housing Secretary Ben Carson, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy of California, Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton and Ivanka Trump.

Coverage of the RNC Convention:

CNN: [RNC Highlights from Day 4](#)

NPR: [7 Takeaways from the Republican National Convention](#)

Fox News: [Trump Seeks Momentum After GOP Convention](#)

BBC: [RNC 2020: Trump warns Biden will ‘demolish’ American dream](#)

Defense News: [Trump repeats questionable NATO funding claims in GOP convention speech](#)

Biden campaign. At the same the GOP was holding their convention, more than [two dozen former GOP lawmakers](#) endorsed the Democratic nominee. The endorsement was announced by the Biden campaign as part of their “Republicans for Biden” effort. Several dozen [former staffers](#) of Sen. Mitt Romney’s presidential campaign, the George W. Bush administration and the campaign, and Senate staff of former Sen. John McCain have endorsed Biden as well. The campaign has also announced that Biden will begin [traveling to swing states](#) for campaign events, though these events will follow state rules about gatherings and travel.

We’re also hearing more about what a possible Biden administration would look like. For national security, it likely means [changes to the defense budget](#), including to everything from basing to personnel policy (such as

changes to the ban on transgender troops) to deployment of troops to an increased focus on certain technologies or issues (like climate change). It is likely that a Biden administration would emphasize nuclear arms control: Biden has already committed to extending New START. It's likely that the land-based leg of the TRIAD would be reviewed, including overall plans for nuclear modernization and the size of the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent system, though [some experts assume](#) that Biden would follow the Obama 2010 nuclear posture review, and ultimately maintain all three legs of the TRIAD.

On Thursday, Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, said at a press event there should be no [presidential debates](#) between former Vice President Biden and President Donald Trump. "I don't think there should be any debates," Pelosi told reporters. "I do not think that the president of the United States has comported himself in a way that anybody should that has any association with truth, evidence, data and facts." Notwithstanding this statement, the Commission on Presidential debates has already negotiated with both political parties to host three debates between the two candidates.

Media roundup of presidential election stories:

Reuters: [Biden gets no convention bounce after Democratic gathering: Reuters/Ipsos poll](#)

Politico: [Susan Rice: I'm qualified to become Biden's secretary of State or Defense](#)

Breaking Defense: [The Fuzzy Outlines Of Biden's National Security Policies](#)

Axios: [How Trump could pull off another upset](#)

Wall Street Journal: [Trump's Unlikely Path to Victory](#)

The Hill: [Inaugural Ceremonies chairman predicts 'socially distanced' inauguration in January](#)

Politico: [Intel officials contradict Trump on voting by mail](#)

2020 Congressional campaigns. In some non-Presidential election news, Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK) – Vice Chair of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee and Chair of the Space Subcommittee – now has her Republican challenger for the November election. State Sen. Stephanie Bice [won the Republican nomination this week defeated Terry Neese in a runoff.](#)

2020 Election tracking. Velocity has put together an election update – [available here](#) – with all sorts of fabulous details about the 2020 Senate, House, and Presidential races, complete with pundit predictions and polls. This is a living document, and we will keep it updated throughout the campaign season, and until the last race is called. Let us know if there are races not listed here that you would like us to track, and we will add them!

Change is inevitable. Regardless of whether the White House changes hands, come January, there will be some new faces on Capitol Hill and throughout the federal government. There will be new Members of Congress, and as a result, a host of new staffers, and there is usually a fair amount of changeover with political appointees, even when an incumbent president wins reelection. No matter what happens in the White House, there are likely to be some changes in congressional and committee leadership too, even if both chambers stay status quo with regard to party control. With just over four months between now and January 3, 2021 (when a new Congress is seated), now is the time to prepare for the inevitable transitions.

Podcasts we love

The Pentagon budget is always a hot topic, especially since there's still work to be done before the FY21 budget is signed, sealed, and delivered. This week, the [DefAero Report Daily Podcast](#) talked with Todd Harrison and Seamus Daniels of the Center for Strategic and International Studies about their recent paper analyzing the FY21 defense budget.

Hypersonics is one technology supported by the defense budget. This week, the Aviation Week [Check 6 podcast](#) focuses on recent hypersonics news, including the revelation that the Air Force is studying intercontinental-range hypersonics that could be nuclear-armed.

And now for some lighter news...

Well, to be fair, this bit is funny mostly because it's true. If you're a fan of the classic Frog and Toad kids' stories, check out this [modern rendition](#) written for covid-times, titled "Frog and Toad Tentatively Go Outside After Months In Self-Quarantine."

Upcoming conferences and other events of interest

- 9/1, 1pm, Dcode Virtual: Interview with Lt. Gen. Thomas Todd, Army Futures Command (register [here](#))
- 9/1 to 9/2, Big Data for Intelligence Symposium, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))
- 9/3, 2pm, Technology at the Speed of Sound: Hypersonics in Defense Strategies (webinar info [here](#))
- 9/9 to 9/10, Defense News Conference, virtual (info and registration [here](#))
- 9/10, 1pm, Fireside Chat with Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy and General John M. Murray, Commanding General Army Futures Command, hosted by Center for a New American Security
- 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](#))
- 9/22, Emerging Technology Meets National Security conference hosted by NVCA (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)
- 11/3 – election day
- 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](#))
- 1/10 to 1/14/21, American Meteorological Society 101st Annual Meeting (registration info [here](#))
- 6/4/21, National Space Club's Goddard Memorial Dinner
- 8/22 to 8/26/21, [36th Space Symposium – rescheduled](#) from late October 2020

What we're reading

Aug. 13, *The Walrus*: [The Wild, Wild West of Space Law](#)

Aug. 19, *Breaking Defense*: [Skyborg: Bold Example Or Another Joint Mistake?](#)

Aug. 20, *National Defense Magazine*: [Continuing Resolution Could Hit Space Force Hard](#)

Aug. 20, *Fierce Wireless*: [Ligado: No, the Earth isn't flat](#)

Aug. 20, *Wired*: [Office Life at the Pentagon Is Disconcertingly Retrograde](#)

Aug. 21, *CSIS Report*: [Analysis of the FY 2021 Defense Budget](#)

Aug. 21, *National Defense Magazine*: [Lawmakers See No Reason to Merge Space Force, NRO](#)

Aug. 21, *The American Conservative*: [Quitting Our Addiction to Small Power Conflicts](#)

Aug. 21, *Aviation Week*: [New Factory Opening Launches Hypersonic Industrial Phase](#)

Aug. 21, *National Defense Magazine*: [Space Command Hints at New Capabilities to Counter China, Russia](#)

Aug. 21, *Aviation Week*: [Are Hypersonic Weapons Destabilizing?](#)

Aug. 21, *Defense One*: [Here's What Might Not Survive COVID Budget Cuts](#)

Aug. 23, *The Hill*: [Top Senate Intel Democrat worried Americans may 'unwittingly' promote Russian disinformation campaign](#)

Aug. 24, *Satellite Today*: [From Imagery to Insights: The Commercial Case for Geospatial Intelligence](#)
Aug. 24, *Axios*: [DOJ charges NASA researcher for hiding relationship with China](#)
Aug. 24, *Military.com*: [Space Wars: Why Top Military Leaders Say US Must Prep for Battles Beyond Earth](#)
Aug. 24, *The Washington Post*: [Zoom went down for hours, disrupting schools and businesses](#)
Aug. 24, *Satellite Today*: [Rocket Lab to Return to Flight With Dedicated Capella Space Mission](#)
Aug. 24, *C4ISRNet*: [NRO set to launch intelligence satellite in the wee hours](#)
Aug. 24, *Task & Purpose*: [This could be the Air Force's future flying car of choice](#)
Aug. 25, *Satellite Today*: [Bill Gates Leads Kymeta's \\$85M Funding Round](#)
Aug. 25, *Space News*: [45th Space Wing on pace for 39 space launches in 2020](#)
Aug. 25, *Tech Crunch*: [Chinese commercial launch startup iSpace raises \\$172 million](#)
Aug. 25, *Defense News*: [For US Air Force pilots, the toughest training flights are going virtual](#)
Aug. 25, *Satellite Today*: [Report Advises Ramp Up Of Space Traffic Management Efforts](#)
Aug. 25, *Air Force Magazine*: [Roper: ABMS Experiment to Highlight Complexity of Future Warfare](#)
Aug. 25, *The Wall Street Journal*: [U.N. Won't Act on U.S. Effort to 'Snapback' Iran Sanctions, Citing Opposition From Security Council Members](#)
Aug. 25, *Space News*: [Industry supports giving space traffic management work to Commerce Department](#)
Aug. 26, *Air Force Magazine*: [Air Force Global Strike Command to Host Women's Leadership Symposium](#)
Aug. 26, *USA Herald*: [Japanese startup ispace raises \\$28 million for "Blueprint Moon" initiative](#)
Aug. 26, *Axios*: [Palantir CEO Alex Karp slams Silicon Valley](#)
Aug. 26, *Defense One*: [CIA's In-Q-Tel Among Backers of German Satellite-Thruster Startup](#)
Aug. 26, *Defense Industry Daily*: [MQ-9 Reaper: Unfettered for Export](#)
Aug. 26, *Satellite Today*: [SpaceX's NASA Contracts Threatened Over Tesla China Ties](#)
Aug. 26, *Air Force Magazine*: [Brown: Air Force Suicides on Pace to Reach 2019 Level](#)
Aug. 26, *The Washington Post*: [Alexei Navalny can't just become another name on the roll call of Putin's victims](#)
Aug. 26, *C4ISRNet*: [US Space Force tests new anti-jamming capability](#)
Aug. 26, *Space News*: [Cape Canaveral's Air Force launch wing to become a space delta](#)
Aug. 27, *Defense One*, [Palantir draws back the veil, Drone maker layoffs, New START's expiration costs, and more](#)
Aug. 27, *Congressional Research Service*, [Hypersonic Weapons: Background and Issues for Congress](#)
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