

Tracking Number 2010-03-09 (CSC-05)
Business Case for Commercial Crew Transportation

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation:

The Council recommends that NASA continue to develop internal metrics and milestones to oversee its Commercial Crew Transportation program and associated industry. Appropriate internal experts can then use these tools to measure whether NASA crew needs will be met in a timely and cost effective manner under this program. Among other things, NASA should be aware of the impact of non-human spaceflight markets, such as cargo and traditional spacecraft launch, on the ability of commercial providers to offer viable crew transportation services, the cost, reliability, and safety implications of the overall commercial space transportation business, and the impact of domestic and foreign competition.

NASA Response:

NASA concurs and plans to develop internal metrics and milestones to measure performance within the commercial crew program.

As part of each acquisition instrument, NASA will negotiate milestones for progress payments to commercial providers. The performance of these milestones will be measured for all commercial providers in NASA's investment portfolio. Additional financial metrics will be developed and analyzed by Government personnel to protect sensitive and proprietary data of the commercial providers. All impacts will be tracked through the program's risk-management process and analyzed in relation to the performance metrics.

Regarding the impact of non-human spaceflight markets, NASA, in conjunction with the FAA, is performing a Commercial Market Assessment, as required by the 2010 NASA Authorization Act. This assessment will include "...the potential non-Government market for commercially-developed crew and cargo transportation systems and capabilities, including an assessment of the ISS research and technology development capabilities and other potential activities in low-Earth orbit."