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| Paper Title: | **Commercial Augmentation for Government Systems** |
| Abstract: | Now more than ever, with rapidly changing world events, the U.S. government needs access to reliable satellite communications (SATCOM) connectivity everywhere, all the time. Once in theatre, the military are using a wide range of extremely data-intensive applications on the ground, at sea, and in the air. This is creating an almost insatiable need for SATCOM capacity – in fact; the Pentagon is using ten times more bandwidth today than in 2001. Meeting this ever-expanding need for SATCOM has been a continual topic of conversation both inside and outside the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). This discussion has taken-on increased urgency with growing world challenges running headlong into a shrinking Pentagon budget. The government's Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) system is one critical piece of this SATCOM solution, but WGS simply cannot "go it alone."<br><br>There's often competing demand for WGS capacity during geographic or mission-specific surges in use, requiring additional SATCOM capacity that is affordable, reliable and accessible on a moment's notice. This is where commercial satellite communications (COMSATCOM) comes into play. Some people mistakenly view military and commercial SATCOM services as competitive. They're not at all – they're complementary! Both military and commercial SATCOM are required to meet government needs, to provide the bandwidth necessary for data-intensive applications, and to maximize the investment in SATCOM that DoD must make by utilizing blended resources. This approach has been championed by DoD officials, discussed at satellite industry roundtables, and featured in the "Commercial Satellite Communications Strategy Report" that was recently delivered to congressional defense oversight committees. Also relative to this discussion are the procurement procedures and costs for using COMSATCOM. This Technical Track presentation will address these issues, and explain how commercial satellite systems can and must augment military space assets in a manner that is practical and affordable. |