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EU SPACE SURVEILLANCE & TRACKING – STATE OF PLAY AND PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

The European Union has consolidated a unique multilateral governance model for its operational EU Space Surveillance & Tracking (EU SST) capability that reconciles the need for greater European autonomy in ensuring the resilience of space-based infrastructure with the requirements posed by sovereign security concerns. Implemented by a Consortium of eight EU member states in cooperation with the EU Satellite Centre, EU SST has been operating since 2016, and today serves a growing user community of over 60 user organizations with Collision Avoidance, Fragmentation and Reentry Analysis, protecting over 130 satellites. The contributing actors are multifaceted and channel a diversity of operational legacies and interests into a real-time operational sensor and data-sharing framework by integrating contributions from the European ecosystem of industry and RD across the entire SSA value chain.

From the vantage point of the EU SST partners, this paper provides an update on recent developments in governance and operations, and highlights emerging developments in light of the dynamics of the consolidation of the proposed European space programme and the contemporary discourse on Space Traffic Management.