

NSG ENTERPRISE COMMERCIAL GEOINT STRATEGY 2021



INTRODUCTION

The *Interim National Security Strategy Guidance* acknowledges that we are in an era of strategic competition. To win, we must leverage commercial technologies and methods that help us move faster and grow stronger. Multiple strategies reflect the guidance. The *National Strategy for Space* states, “Pursue diverse, robust space capabilities that leverage a combination of allied/partner, commercial, and civil systems.” The *National Defense Strategy* continues, “New commercial technology will change society and, ultimately, the character of war.” The *Defense Space Strategy* notes, “The DoD has an opportunity to leverage innovation and cost-effective investments driven by the private sector.”


The National System for Geospatial Intelligence (NSG) collectively must harness the benefits of working with commercial providers or risk falling behind the accelerating global standard in GEOINT capabilities. To continue to maintain and grow our competitive advantage, we must team with commercial GEOINT providers – the world leaders in a number of arenas, including the remote sensing arena. We must build on our existing strong partnerships with other government agencies, academia, combatant commands, and allies and make this investment together; no single agency or organization can or should be the sole investor in commercial capabilities.

Our *NSG Strategy 2021–2025* seeks unity of effort for co-production and synchronized planning. Specifically, it creates strategic goals to give analysts discoverable and shareable content on all domains; uses standards to deliver protected and interoperable GEOINT; and produces GEOINT at the lowest classification level and shares it at the broadest level of releasability.

I am pleased to present this *NSG Enterprise Commercial GEOINT Strategy*. It provides a capstone vision for greater unity of effort and efficiency through transparency and partnership. Unity of effort begins by linking all our strategies. This strategy also intends to spur new procurement models that allow members of the enterprise to harness the newest sensors, data, products, and services to advance our mission.

New sources breed new methods. New methods breed new doctrine and policy. The way forward must include shareable intelligence produced at a pace that wins both the physical battle and the communications battle for hearts and minds. Commercial GEOINT is a critical element of our national strategy, and the NSG will be the primary driver for national security use cases. It is up to us to make the most of this opportunity together.

Strength Through Community



Robert D. Sharp
VADM, USN
GEOINT Functional Manager

The *NSG Strategy 2021–2025* describes our three goals, which are to be professional, interoperable and unified. This strategy describes the approach to commercial GEOINT that is consistent with our overarching NSG strategic goals as we continue to expand partnerships to this growing domain. This *NSG Enterprise Commercial GEOINT Strategy* has four pillars.

Drive Unity of Effort

The goal is to cooperate to increase transparency, commonality, and coordinated purpose. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Foster a culture of “commercial as a primary source” to maximize utility of commercial capabilities for unclassified and classified use cases;
- Apply automation and artificial intelligence/machine learning to commercial data in combination with other sources to accelerate our activities;
- Foster greater interoperability among our disparate processes and sources of data;
- Build a prioritized set of unclassified mission needs that we can work on together;
- Work with our partners to expand or create unclassified production capabilities for community use; and
- Strengthen the role of commercial sources for classified requirements.

Diversify Sources and Build Capacity Through Partnerships

The goal is to ensure that NSG members are able to continue their mission if their usual source is unavailable, as well as to increase the capacity at the enterprise level. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Increase architectural resiliency through diversity of sources, supply channels, and delivery modes;
- Adapt our processes and systems to integrate commercial services, products, data, and pixels in ways that ensure the information is fit for use;
- Strengthen international and domestic partnerships to diversify and expand capacity; and
- Create a supplier matrix to match verified commercial suppliers with buyers, as well as buyers with other buyers, to create synergies and efficiencies.

Improve Data Security and Develop Processes to Mitigate Risks

The goal is to strengthen the security of, and trust in, commercial GEOINT. At the same time, we must find ways to isolate and manage risks, which will allow us to harness the newest capabilities more quickly. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Strengthen security at data ingest points and implement zero-trust measures;
- Work with data providers over time to strengthen supply chain security; and
- Develop mechanisms to isolate risks from valuable but less-secure sources.

Influence and Foster Commercial Capabilities

The goal is to continue to work with industry to support rapid innovation, ensuring continuous progress in improving the utility commercial solutions against our challenges. This will give industry partners greater incentive to build capabilities that serve our national security interests. Initiatives to achieve this include:

- Make it easier to quickly explore and evaluate emerging commercial capabilities;
- Describe IC and DoD priorities to encourage innovation and new capabilities;
- Invest in commercial capabilities. with the intent to share among partners;
- Share data and experience to create trusted referrals for commercial data sources; and
- Work to unleash industry to develop the most-trusted capabilities in the world.



We are taking full advantage of commercial products and commercial imagery, and revising some of our workflows, so that we can start to do some of our mainstream work at the unclassified level.

— Breaking Defense, Vice Adm. Sharp, 22 April 2020

We want commercial industry to develop automated imagery exploitation algorithms, and to bring multiple sources together so that we can get a stream of information or daily feeds, and activity updates that feed our national security algorithms.

— ExecutiveGov, David Gauthier, NGA, 22 September 2020