

# Understanding, Managing, and Reporting U.S. Space Force Readiness

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## ISSUE

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As a branch of the U.S. armed services, the U.S. Space Force (USSF) must understand, manage, and report its readiness. The readiness-related systems of the U.S. Department of Defense, like many systems that support and govern the USSF, were not designed to meet the unique demands of the military space community. The newly independent USSF has an opportunity to create systems that work better given the unique characteristics of operations in and through outer space. This report recommends a readiness framework for the USSF.



## APPROACH

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To develop the recommended framework, Project AIR FORCE (PAF) began with a review of the readiness policy and practice of other military services, continued with the study of the current USSF readiness reporting system (including related areas of organizational and mission design), and identified areas of improvement. Researchers then developed the framework for USSF readiness. The research used a mixed methods approach, including literature reviews, unstructured subject matter expert and stakeholder interviews, and analysis of recent Defense Readiness Reporting System–Strategic (DRRS-S) data. The framework design relied on team-based exercises and discussions and the specifics of use case examples. The primary outputs of this research are the recommended framework and a transition plan to implement the framework.



## CONCLUSIONS

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The USSF has unique organizational, operational, and technological characteristics that affect how its readiness should be understood and reported.

- While it is mandatory for DRRS-S to be used for reporting to the U.S. Congress, other U.S. military services have created frameworks to augment DRRS-S and meet their internal needs.
- The USSF's highest-priority need for a readiness framework is one that can measure readiness against the full range of threats, including its ability to evolve to confront those threats. This includes elements of organizational and mission design.

- Heritage measures of readiness, and the enterprise systems that support them, focus on today's organize, train, and equip (OT&E) posture and are not suited to measuring an evolving force.
- Current reporting systems cannot provide objective measures of the risks of unfunded requirements, unrealized capability development, and incomplete reorganizations.
- Readiness reporting in the USSF is currently broken.
  - Sources of readiness data, inherited from the U.S. Air Force, spoil readiness information because critical resources are not included, classified information is not supported, and organizational dependencies in the USSF are not captured.
  - Objective measures of readiness can be inaccurate due to data quality issues.
  - Units are being asked to report too much (including readiness against the range of emerging threats) given the capabilities of the reporting systems.
  - Commander remarks contain much of the critical readiness information, but that information is often not readily actionable.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The USSF should adopt a readiness framework that augments DRRS-S and measures readiness against a complete range of threats; this framework includes three views of readiness (see figure):

- **readiness given today's resources** measures unit readiness considering currently authorized resources and expected capabilities
- **readiness based on needed capabilities** measures unit readiness considering resources and capabilities needed to be ready against the full range of identified threats
- **readiness based on the pace of transformation** measures the USSF's ability to change and adapt to new threats.

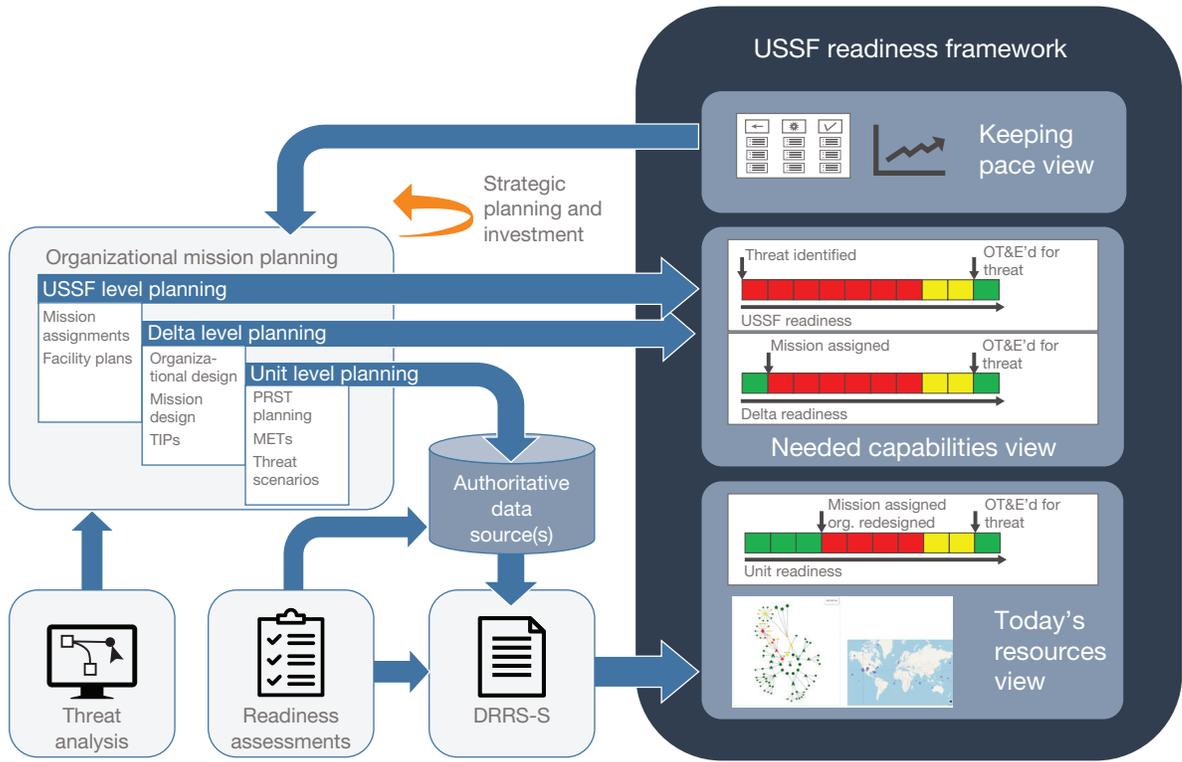
In transitioning to this new framework, the USSF should take four major steps to improve the reporting of readiness:

- Improve readiness reporting given today's resources by correcting errors and omissions in readiness data sources and focusing DRRS-S data on this view of readiness.
- Improve the reporting of readiness based on needed capabilities by publishing guidance, identifying reporting requirements, and creating a data repository for this view of readiness.
- Implement reporting on the pace of transformation by establishing measures and reporting responsibilities.
- Manage the USSF's processes to increase the pace of USSF transformation using the readiness reporting information.

Actions that can improve readiness in the shorter term include the following:

- Redefine authoritative data sources (ADSs) to better match the security needs of the space community, capture all critical equipment, and better represent the interdependencies of space systems and organizations.
- Implement USSF force presentation models, when prepared, in personnel readiness reporting.
- Capture readiness of supporting units (e.g., engineering, security, etc.) as part of Delta-level assessments.

**THE PROPOSED USSF READINESS FRAMEWORK**



NOTE: METs = Mission Essential Tasks; PRST = Personnel, equipment Readiness, Supply, and Training; TIPs = Tactic Improvement Proposals; OT&E'd = organized, trained, and equipped.

While researchers describe current USSF readiness reporting as broken, they believe that the creation of an independent USSF provides an opportunity to improve the systems by which readiness is understood, managed, and reported, and hope that this report is helpful in achieving that goal.



**PROJECT AIR FORCE**

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