Space Watch

2026-W42 · 12 Oct – 18 Oct 2026
Makani Lab · Space Watch
Orbital Warfare · SATCOM · SDA · PNT · Satellite Control · Missile Warning · ISR · EW

BLUF — DPRK fired ballistic missiles on 12 Oct and sub-launched cruise missiles on 14 Oct; China grew Guowang. Starshield service to Ukraine was curtailed by a disputed U.S. decision. Attention item: theater SATCOM on Starshield or commercial LEO can be cut by policy, not only by jamming.

LAST 7 DAYS BY MISSION AREA · 311 ITEMS



Orbital Warfare 7 · SATCOM 79
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Electronic Warfare 11 · Space Enterprise 133

RISING TERMS · 7D VS PRIOR

Ukraine		74 (+63.7)
Starlink		61 (+35.4)
Starshield		24 (+23.7)
SpaceX		49 (+17.7)

BY THE NUMBERS · 7D

Orbital launches 4 (1 PRC, 3 US, 0 failed) · max Kp 3.67
GPS NANUs 4 (0 unusable) · reentries 17 (12 payloads)
Conjunctions < 1 km, next 7 d: 9,478 (7111 active pairs)
Space-Track emergency-reportable CDMs 28, TIP reentries 14 (0 high-interest)

COUNTERSPACE SPOTLIGHT — CASC / CASIC (PRC STATE INDUSTRY) · PRC state-owned space industry · CASC (satellites, Long March), CASIC (missiles, Kuaizhou, Hongyun)

WHY NOW

Long March 12 and Zhuque-2E added Guowang and computing satellites this week; four more PRC launches are set for 21-23 Oct (SpaceNews; LL2).

MENTIONS, 30D · PACOM RELEVANCE



1 this week. PRC LEO constellations overfly Guam, Japan and the first island chain, adding SDA custody load and PLA comms reach.

CAPABILITIES / TTPS

- Long March 12 launches building the Guowang LEO comms constellation
- Zhuque-2E Y4: 10 satellites incl. 8 computing sats, 14 Oct
- 72 PRC orbital launches in 2026, second to the U.S. (LL2)

IMPLICATIONS

- Laser-linked Guowang: a harder-to-deny PLA comms layer.
- Launch rate adds SDA load and a fast path to replace losses.

Orbital Warfare

Counterspace threats and space superiority: ASAT tests and weapons, co-orbital a

German Space Command's Major General Traut Warns of Russian Threat to Commercial Satellite Networks

SpaceWatch.Global · 2026-10-11

German Space Command chief says Russian satellites are shadowing allied spacecraft (SpaceWatch.Global).

So what: An allied space command is now publicly naming Russian shadowing of partner satellites.

Consider: Be aware of allied RPO disclosures; consider raising Russian shadowing in CSpO channels.

EUCOM · SPACECOM · Rendezvous & proximity · Counterspace threat · Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS)

Missile Warning

Missile warning and tracking from space and ground: SBIRS and Next-Gen OPIR, res

U.S. Pacific Command Statement on DPRK Missile Launches

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command · 2026-10-12

DPRK fired two ballistic missiles on 12 Oct KST (INDOPACOM); ROK JCS: over 900 km (Yonhap).

So what: Came four days after ROK's 8 Oct HGV test; launch tempo stays high.

Consider: Be aware DPRK may answer further ROK weapons tests with more launches toward the East Sea.

PACOM · Missile launches & tests

North Korea's 'Hunchback' Missile Submarine Makes First At-Sea Appearance For Missile Tests

The War Zone · 2026-10-15

DPRK fired two sub-launched cruise missiles on 14 Oct (KCNA), likely from Hero Kim Kun Ok (TWZ).

So what: Sea-launched cruise missiles are a hard case for space-based MW.

Consider: Consider how theater MW reporting covers sub-launched cruise missiles as well as ballistic launches.

PACOM · Missile launches & tests

SATCOM

Military and commercial satellite communications: WGS, MUOS, AEHF/ESS, protected

Musk Says U.S. Government is in Control of Starlink Speeds for Ukraine's Military

Via Satellite · 2026-10-14

Ukraine says Starshield cut out above ~100 mph from 14 Oct; Musk says the U.S. government sets the limits.

So what: Starshield and commercial SATCOM access can be cut by policy, not only by jamming.

Consider: Consider which theater missions rely on Starshield and their fallback.

EUCOM · SPACECOM · Commercial integration · Proliferated LEO · Starlink / Starshield

Space Domain Awareness

Knowing what is on orbit and what the environment is doing: space surveillance a

BlackSky Renews HEO Deal, Adds Gen-3 Imagery for Space Domain Awareness

Payload · 2026-10-15

BlackSky renewed its seven-figure deal with Australian non-Earth imaging firm HEO, adding 35 cm Gen-3 imagery of objects in orbit; HEO recently raised $25M to extend its network to GEO (Payload).

So what: An allied commercial source of close-up imagery for characterizing spacecraft and RPO.

Consider: Consider HEO non-Earth imaging as a partner source for characterizing PRC and Russian spacecraft.

SPACECOM · PACOM · Commercial integration · Allies & partners · CASC / CASIC (PRC state industry)

Satellite Control

Flying the constellations: the Satellite Control Network, ground segment and ant

Space Sector Faced More than One Cyberattack Per Day in 2025

Via Satellite · 2026-10-14

A Via Satellite op-ed counts 407 cyber operations against the space sector in 2025, 61% DDoS and 13% ransomware; one attack disabled SATCOM modems across two Iranian shipping fleets.

So what: Ground segments, suppliers and terminals are the most-attacked part of the space enterprise.

Consider: Consider reviewing ground-segment and terminal cyber hygiene with commercial SATCOM providers.

SPACECOM · CYBERCOM · Cyber & space systems · Commercial integration

ISR

Space-based intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance: tactical ISR from spa

High Altitude Balloons Are A “Game-Changing” Capability: Army Space Command Boss

The War Zone · 2026-10-14

SMDC's Lt. Gen. Rafferty called high-altitude balloons 'game-changing' for ISR and effects. The Army cancelled a Pacific balloon swarm test last year and sent the systems to the Middle East (TWZ).

So what: Persistent near-space sensing is in demand, and the Pacific test was traded for CENTCOM needs.

Consider: Be aware balloon ISR assets may be scarce in the AOR while CENTCOM demand continues.

PACOM · CENTCOM · Exercises & training

Space Enterprise

The service and the enterprise behind the mission areas: force design and organi

Space Force Activates Component Under Special Operations Command

Air & Space Forces Magazine · 2026-10-13

USSF activated Space Forces Special Operations (SPACEFOR-SOC), its component to SOCOM, on 7 Oct per a memo Air & Space Forces Magazine confirmed. A ceremony is planned; no commander is named yet.

So what: SOF space support in the AOR now has a dedicated component alongside Space Forces Indo-Pacific.

Consider: Consider how SPACEFOR-SOC and Space Forces Indo-Pacific will coordinate support to SOF in theater.

SPACECOM · Organization & people

Nothing significant this week: PNT / Navwar · Electronic Warfare

WATCH LIST

- PRC launches, payloads undisclosed: Ceres-1S 21 Oct; Long March 8A 22 Oct; Long March 6A and 4B 23 Oct.
- SOCRATES lists COSMOS 2612 within 26-115 m of ICEYE-X36 at ~0 km/s, 18-21 Oct; unconfirmed, check 18 SDS.
- GPS NANU outages PRN15 21 Oct, PRN12 22-23 Oct, PRN08 23 Oct; SWPC G1 storm watch for 20 Oct.

RECOMMENDATIONS (FOR AWARENESS)

- Consider reviewing theater dependence on Starshield/Starlink and the fallback SATCOM path for each mission.
- Recommend requesting 18 SDS characterization of the COSMOS 2612 / ICEYE-X36 pairing before briefing it.
- Be aware of four PRC launches 21-23 Oct with undisclosed payloads; consider watching for Yaogan or Guowang.