Space Watch

2026-W44 · 26 Oct – 01 Nov 2026
Makani Lab · Space Watch
Orbital Warfare · SATCOM · SDA · PNT · Satellite Control · Missile Warning · ISR · EW

BLUF — DIA's Challenges to Security in Space (26 Oct) says China may field space-based and higher-power ground directed-energy weapons by the late 2020s, confirms PLA on-orbit jammers and SAR jammers, and shows a PRC spaceplane that releases and meets satellites. USSF wants cislunar kit by 2029; Vulcan returns 13 Nov, no NSSL date. G2 storm 31 Oct. Attention item: theater SAR, SATCOM and GEO assets are named PLA targets.

LAST 7 DAYS BY MISSION AREA · 259 ITEMS



Orbital Warfare 19 · SATCOM 17
Space Domain Awareness 18 · PNT / Navwar 13
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Electronic Warfare 8 · Space Enterprise 124

RISING TERMS · 7D VS PRIOR

China		28 (+13.7)
North Korea		19 (+9.3)
Lockheed Martin		14 (+7.6)
contract		36 (+7.1)

BY THE NUMBERS · 7D

Orbital launches 3 (0 PRC, 2 US, 0 failed) · max Kp 6
GPS NANUs 4 (0 unusable) · reentries 12 (10 payloads)
Conjunctions < 1 km, next 7 d: 9,056 (6787 active pairs)
Space-Track emergency-reportable CDMs 28, TIP reentries 14 (0 high-interest)

COUNTERSPACE SPOTLIGHT — PLA AEROSPACE FORCE · PRC (PLA; the Aerospace Force stood up April 2024 from the Strategic Support Force) · PLA ASF, ex-PLA SSF Space Systems Department

WHY NOW

DIA's 26 Oct report adds space-based DEW by the late 2020s, on-orbit jammers and SAR jammers to the PLA counterspace list and releases an image of its spaceplane.

MENTIONS, 30D · PACOM RELEVANCE



5 this week. DIA says PLA doctrine treats ASATs as a deterrent to outside involvement in a regional conflict.

CAPABILITIES / TTPS

- Ground lasers that can disrupt, degrade or destroy LEO satellites; space DEW by the late 2020s
- Ground and on-orbit jammers, incl. SAR jammers aimed at military reconnaissance (DIA 2026)
- GEO approaches within 10 km of foreign satellites; spaceplane that releases and meets objects

IMPLICATIONS

- SAR, OPIR and GEO SATCOM serving INDOPACOM face reversible effects that may be hard to attribute in time.
- SDA custody of PRC GEO inspectors and the spaceplane is a precondition for space indications and warning.

Orbital Warfare

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

U.S. Intel Warns China's Space-Based Directed Energy Weapons Could Soon Threaten Satellites

The War Zone · 2026-10-28

DIA's Challenges to Security in Space (26 Oct) says China may field space-based and higher-power ground DEWs that threaten higher orbits by the late 2020s and probably intends more LEO-to-GEO ASAT missiles (TWZ; A&SF).

So what: Directed-energy attacks on theater satellites can be reversible, repeatable and hard to attribute.

Consider: Consider reviewing dazzle/damage indicators and anomaly-reporting paths with 18 SDS and theater units.

SPACECOM · PACOM · Counterspace threat · PLA Aerospace Force

U.S. Intel Confirms This Is China's Secret Spaceplane

The War Zone · 2026-10-27

DIA released a Maxar image of the PRC spaceplane, near-identical to the X-37B; DIA says it has released, maneuvered around and met other satellites. Its fourth mission launched 7 Feb and has not returned, per TWZ.

So what: A maneuvering, reusable platform that can deploy objects in LEO over the Pacific.

Consider: Be aware the spaceplane is on orbit; consider requesting 18 SDS custody and deployment reporting.

SPACECOM · PACOM · Rendezvous & proximity · Counterspace threat · PLA Aerospace Force

Space Domain Awareness

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

Space Force Wants Cislunar Kit Ready to Launch by 2029

Air & Space Forces Magazine · 2026-10-26

The Space Force wants commercial or near-commercial cislunar hardware ready to launch by 2029; two RFIs are imminent and AFRL/SpaceWERX will run a $30M challenge, per Maj. Gen. Purdy (A&SF).

So what: Cislunar SDA gaps leave PRC lunar-program activity beyond GEO unwatched.

Consider: Be aware of the coming RFIs; consider passing theater cislunar SDA needs through SPACECOM.

SPACECOM · Lunar & cislunar · Acquisition & contracts · Cislunar (CHPS/Oracle)

Vyoma Brings Flamingo-1, Germany's First Space-Based SDA Telescope, Into Operation

SpaceWatch.Global · 2026-10-29

German firm Vyoma began routine operations with Flamingo-1, its first space-based space surveillance satellite, imaging objects across orbital regions (SpaceWatch.Global).

So what: Adds an allied commercial SDA source for custody of objects of interest.

Consider: Consider Vyoma as a candidate commercial SDA source alongside current CASR vendors.

SPACECOM · Allies & partners · Commercial integration

ISR

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

China has tripled its satellite fleet since 2018 as expansion continues: DIA

Breaking Defense (Space) · 2026-10-27

DIA says China's satellite fleet has tripled since 2018 (Breaking Defense); its ISR fleet passed 510 systems by July 2026, many nominally commercial or civil but usable by the PLA, per TWZ.

So what: PLA can hold U.S. and allied forces in the Pacific under persistent overhead watch.

Consider: Consider factoring 510+ PRC ISR satellites into OPSEC and overflight-warning planning.

PACOM · Counterspace threat · PLA Aerospace Force

Electronic Warfare

Space electromagnetic warfare: Counter Communications System and Meadowlands, Bo

China Developing More On-Orbit Space Weapons: New Report

Air & Space Forces Magazine · 2026-10-28

DIA notes PLA jammers on orbit for the first time and says Chinese firms build SAR jammers for the PLA; it adds that DPRK may be developing jammers effective against military GPS (Air & Space Forces Magazine).

So what: SAR targeting and military GPS the theater relies on are named jamming targets.

Consider: Consider reviewing SAR tasking and GPS-denied procedures for Korea and Taiwan Strait scenarios.

SPACECOM · PACOM · Counterspace threat · GNSS interference · PLA Aerospace Force

Space Enterprise

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

ULA says Vulcan Rocket Will Launch Again in November After Monthslong Pause

Air & Space Forces Magazine · 2026-10-28

Vulcan returns to flight 13 Nov with Amazon LEO satellites on a redesigned SRB nozzle; USSF will use commercial flight data before setting military missions. The grounding delayed Next-Gen OPIR (A&SF).

So what: Next-Gen OPIR and other GEO missions stay on hold until Vulcan is cleared.

Consider: Be aware NSSL Vulcan dates are open; consider tracking Next-Gen OPIR launch slips.

SPACECOM · Launch · SBIRS / Next-Gen OPIR

Astroscale Wins New UK MoD Contract Focused on Orbital Defense

Via Satellite · 2026-10-28

UK MoD named Astroscale UK prime for LEDA, a £15M orbital-warfare and counter-RPO program with BAE and Open Cosmos (Via Satellite). The EDF picked OSMOS X to lead an on-orbit threat study (Payload).

So what: A CSpO ally is moving from RPO demos toward counter-RPO operations.

Consider: Consider LEDA as a UK partnership topic at the next CSpO or bilateral space talks.

SPACECOM · EUCOM · Allies & partners · Acquisition & contracts

Nothing significant this week: SATCOM · PNT / Navwar · Satellite Control · Missile Warning

WATCH LIST

- 3 Nov: Kinetica 2 (SpaceSail/G60) from Jiuquan 0010Z; Falcon 9 USSF-432 from Vandenberg 0142Z (LL2).
- 4-5 Nov: ROK ADD small military launcher demo flight (TBC); Long March 2C, unknown payload, 5 Nov 1600Z (LL2).
- Kosmos 2612: Integrity ISR said Russia could approach ICEYE-X37 within weeks; watch for a new RPO.

RECOMMENDATIONS (FOR AWARENESS)

- Recommend staff review DIA's 2026 Challenges to Security in Space for PLA DEW, on-orbit jamming and spaceplane findings.
- Consider requesting 18 SDS custody updates on the PRC spaceplane and any objects it releases.
- Be aware Space-Track CDM/TIP data was not refreshed this week; conjunction and reentry lines rely on CelesTrak.