

India's ASAT Ambitions: An Australian Perspective

Brett Biddington
Chair

Space Industry Association of Australia

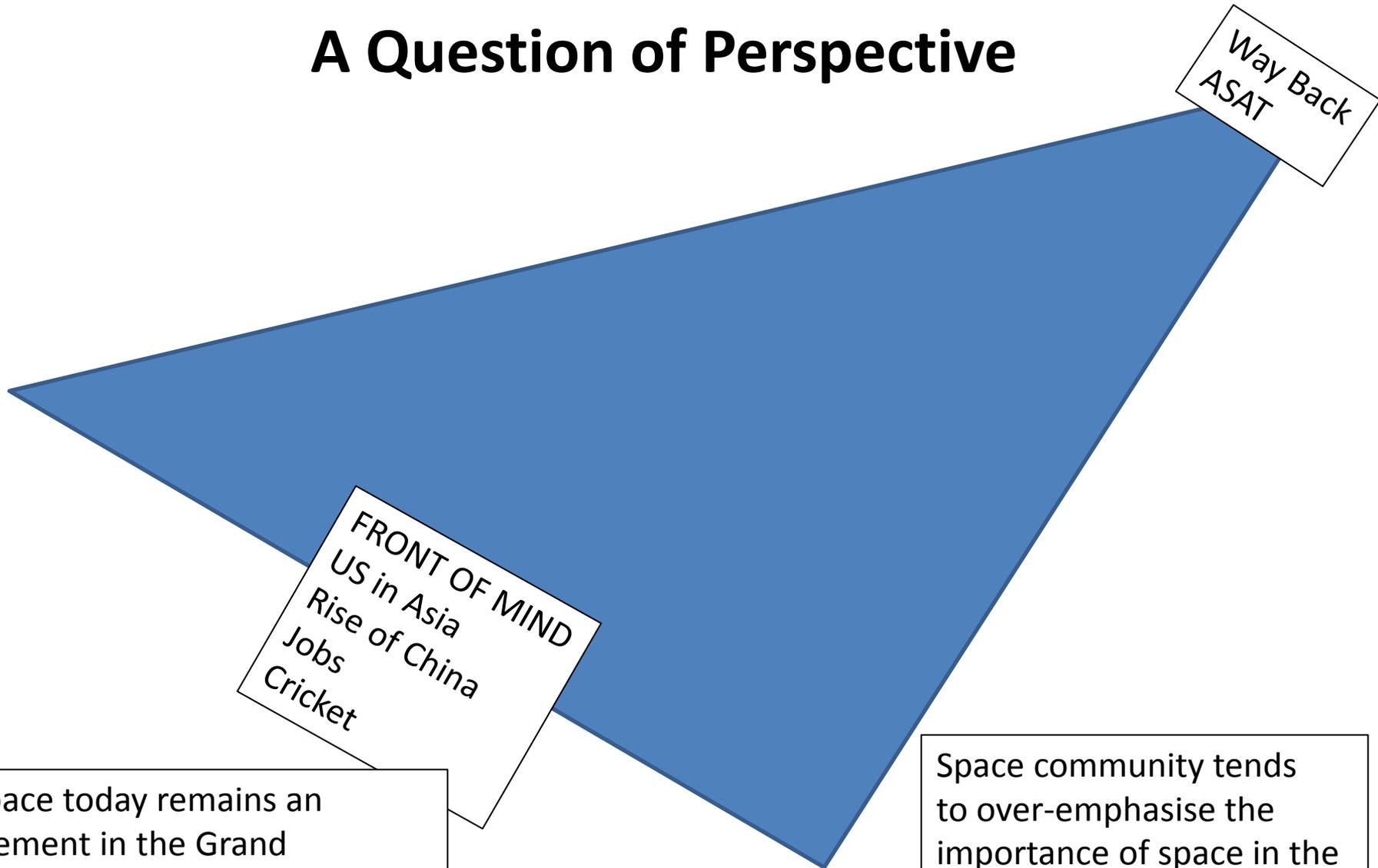
Former RAAF officer

Former diplomat

Former member of Cisco Systems Global Space Team

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An Indian ASAT: A Question of Perspective



Space today remains an element in the Grand Strategies of the great and emerging great powers

Space community tends to over-emphasise the importance of space in the grand scheme

An Indian ASAT: A Question of Perspective

- Do Australian policy makers worry? In a word, NO.
- Why:
 - lack of understanding about space matters
 - similar to most nations below the Tropic of Cancer – which have supplicant or dependent relationships on others with regard to space
 - recognition that India's policy makers have many other bigger questions on their minds
 - Technical CAPABILITY one thing, INTENT another
 - India's ASAT ambitions a second order question/concern

An Indian ASAT

- A product of technological advancement
- Not an important plank in an emerging grand strategy
- India has too many other pressing problems to worry about – notably national and international survival (and winning the ICC World Cup!)
 - These are tactical and operational issues
 - They inhibit development of a compelling vision or narrative of India's place in the world, let alone in space

What do Australian Policy Makers Worry About?

1. The future role of the US in the world esp. the Asia Pacific
2. How this will influence and be influenced by the rise of China and India and how these nations will determine and bound areas of cooperation and competition
3. Into this mix, the influences of Russia, Japan, and a number of lesser powers (the Koreas, Indonesia Pakistan and Iran)
4. Some very big global issues: Rudd's top 10:
Global financial stability, nuclear proliferation, cyber-revolution, terrorism, rise of China, rise of India, 'rules of the road' in the Indian Ocean Region, global governance

India's Role in the World

An Australian Perspective

- Australia is watching developments closely
- Why:
 - India is an emerging world power, struggling with questions of identity, self-confidence, and a vision for itself
 - Confronts huge daily concerns on and within its borders:
 - Pakistan
 - an emergent and confident China
 - profound domestic challenges
 - Governance in the Indian Ocean and immediate region
- Australia investing significantly in strengthened bilateral relations with India (eg S&T cooperation)
 - Set against this broader context, ASAT capability is considered to be less important

The Need for a New Space Narrative

Four fundamental questions

- Assured and secure access to a fragile physical and political environment
- Space debris management and mitigation
- Spectrum allocation and management
- Managing expectations of new states with space ambitions

All are incapable of being solved by individual nations acting in isolation – dilemmas and paradoxes “dual use”, space remains fundamentally the preserve of national states, classical ‘prisoner’s dilemma’

The Need for a New Space Narrative

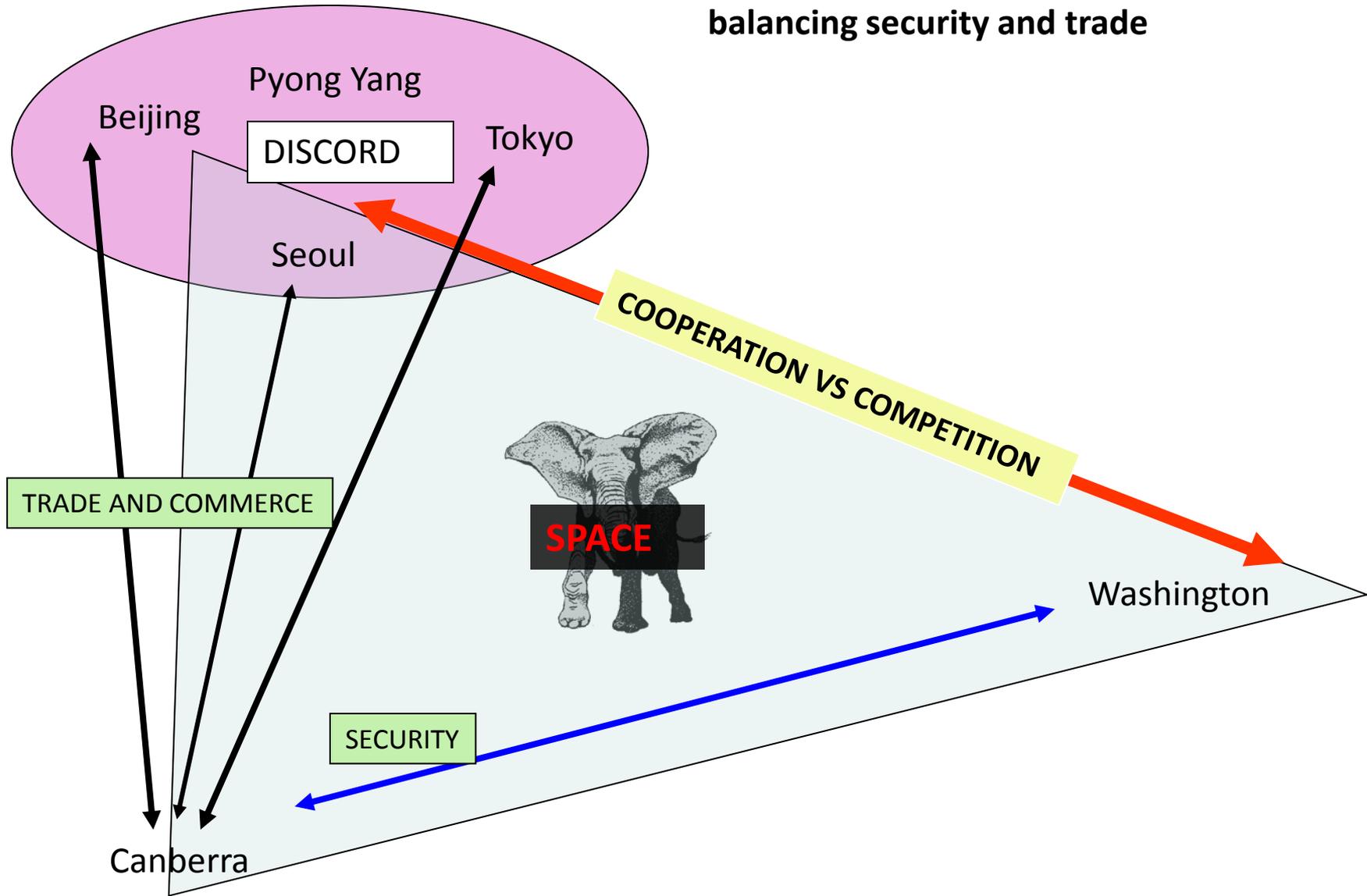
- The language of space presumes competition and conflict
 - Space race
 - Star wars
 - Anti-satellite (ie a counter to something in place)
 - The ghost of “technology transfer”
- Focus is ‘platformcentric’ - many new possibilities emerge if a ‘networkcentric’ or ‘usercentric’ view is adopted – especially for the space dispossessed nations and peoples of the Southern Hemisphere (below the Tropic of Cancer)
- The Obama space policy emphasises “international cooperation” – however the language and behaviours that turn those words into reality are not yet apparent. We know the “what”, we need the “how”

Australia's Approach to Space

Enduring Drivers

- Australia's strategic geography – the continent is ideally located to host ground stations
- Alliance relationships – facilities and activities vital to the national interests of the US and previously the UK have been hosted to Australia's strategic and operational benefit (in the Cold War an interdependent relationship – no longer the case)
- Good International Citizen – Australia is committed to the concept that space should be a domain used for peaceful purposes to benefit all of humankind
- Cost – Australia has gained access to space-based utilities without having to bear the costs of technology development and the many risks associated with space operations – cake and eat it too!

Australia's vital regional interests: balancing security and trade



Defence White Paper 2009



DEFENDING AUSTRALIA
IN THE ASIA PACIFIC CENTURY:
FORCE 2030



DEFENCE
WHITE
PAPER
2009

www.defence.gov.au

32 references to 'space' (2000 – nil)

14 references to 'satellite' (2000 – 2)

2 references to 'BMD' and a call for
"hedging investments"

A SAR satellite will be acquired

A cadre of 'space specialists' will be
developed

Space Situational Awareness: a priority

What Will Not Emerge

- A launch industry
- Rejuvenation of Woomera as other than a military test range
- Any commitment to joining manned space programs
- Any national commitment to space exploration beyond hosting ground stations (as is presently done for NASA and ESA) and supporting recovery missions

Watchwords will remain **pragmatism** and **persistence**

What Is Emerging

- Leadership and coordination – SPU and SIIC
- A national space policy – including a prioritised investment program:
 - ground infrastructure – GNSS, remote sensing
 - space situational awareness (SSA)
 - maybe hosted payloads
 - a SAR satellite in 2020-2025 (and intermediate capability steps)
- Education and training - ASRP
- Research and industry involvement – inc. formal arrangements with several space agencies – ASRP
- AUSMIN and AUSUKMIN – focus on space security (SSA) and cyberspace

Thank you