



New Defense-Focused Survey Finds Military Personnel Increasingly Concerned About Communications Keeping Pace with Adversaries

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Survey Finds 68% of DoD Personnel Believe Adversaries Will Match or Surpass U.S. Military Communications Capabilities within Five Years; 77% Say Advanced Space-Based Network Capabilities Are Needed for Future Fight

WASHINGTON and CARLSBAD, Calif., May 10, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- [Viasat Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: VSAT) a global communications company, today announced results from its Annual State of Military Communications study conducted by the Government Business Council ([GBC](#)), the research division of [Government Executive Media Group](#). Despite signs of improving U.S. defense communications reliability, the survey points to growing concern among Department of Defense (DoD) personnel about U.S. military communications' capabilities being surpassed by adversaries and a lack of current action being taken to address this challenge. A copy of the complete survey report can be [found here](#).

According to the third annual survey, more than two-thirds (68%) of respondents said they believe near-peer adversaries will match or surpass U.S. military communications capabilities within five years, including 36% believing this will happen in the next two years. In addition, nearly three-quarters (73%) of DoD respondents believe that U.S. defense communication technologies are on par with or falling behind those used by adversaries, which represents a 13-percentage point increase from 2020.

These findings come despite DoD personnel also reporting greater reliability in their own experience with defense communications. More than half (52%) of respondents said they rarely or never experience a complete loss in connectivity, a significant increase from 34% in 2020 and 24% in 2019, indicating steady year-over-year improvement in reliability. However, 85% of respondents still reported experiencing at least one such disruption in the last year.

Other key findings from the survey include:

Actions aren't aligned with beliefs yet on communications improvements and value in commercial capability

- 83% of respondents said they believe improvements to defense communications should be a top or high priority for their agency compared with other priorities. Also, a majority (55%) of respondents agreed commercial capabilities can deliver the same or better levels of performance compared to DoD purpose-built communications.
 - Additionally, more than half of respondents (59%) agreed increasing the use of commercial solutions is critical to accelerating strategic initiatives like Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) or other joint warfighting programs.
- However, when asked if their agency would adopt commercial defense communications technology and services in the next year to keep pace with adversaries, just 33% said commercial communications adoption was very (26%) or extremely (7%) likely to happen. Similarly, just 35% of respondents said their agency was taking advantage of new acquisition processes and mechanisms like OTAs and as-a-service models to help update defense communications technologies.

Space-based networks and commercial solutions needed for future warfighting

- More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents agree the future fight will require advanced space-based networking capability to meet operational and mission needs. But, despite acknowledging the importance of space networks, just 19% said their agency was actively investing in advanced satellite communications to support modern warfighter needs.

Cyber-attacks on defense communications technology/infrastructure remain a challenge

- 40% of respondents feel their agency is adequately prepared for a cyber-attack on defense communications technology/infrastructure. While this may signal an improvement from 2020, when only 24% of respondents were very or extremely confident in their agency's preparedness for a cyber-attack on defense communications, it is still concerning that nearly three in 10 respondents (28%) don't think their agency is adequately prepared for such a cyber-attack.

Next-gen technologies needed to advance defense communications, but investment is lagging

- Artificial Intelligence (AI), cloud computing and 5G technology were the top technologies selected by respondents to advance defense communications capabilities. However, active investment in these technologies appears to be lagging with just 27% of respondents saying their agency is actively investing in AI and 26% in 5G. Cloud was the biggest priority next-gen technology, with 37% saying their agency is actively investing in cloud to support defense communications.

"In its third year, the State of Military Communications survey highlights both encouraging and concerning trends surrounding the future of U.S. military communications. Government is recognizing the need to modernize defense communications and the value of commercial capabilities," said Craig Miller, president of Viasat Government Systems. "But cultural change is often more difficult than technological change. DoD personnel see adversaries closing the capabilities gap and know new approaches are needed if the U.S. is going to maintain an advantage. Multi-domain communications and data transport is not only vital to missions, but it will likely be a deciding factor in future conflicts."

A complete copy of the State of Military Communications survey report is [available online](#).

About the research and methodology

From August 2021 to January 2022, GBC deployed a survey to a random sample of military government employees to measure change over time in the state of military communications technology. This year's survey is the latest of two previous iterations of the surveys deployed August-September 2019 and September-October 2020. Responses of 312 defense employees were captured after quality control and screening, including 43% ranked GS-14 and above. Respondents represent all branches of the military, with the greatest input from the Army and Air Force.

About Government Business Council

As Government Executive Media Group's research division, Government Business Council (GBC) is dedicated to advancing the business of government through analysis, insight and analytical independence. An extension of Government Executive's 50 years of exemplary editorial standards, GBC produces over 100 research initiatives each year, studying influential decision-makers across all sectors in government to provide invaluable insights, thought leadership content and marketing intelligence for government contractors.

About Viasat

Viasat is a global communications company that believes everyone and everything in the world can be connected. For more than 35 years, Viasat has helped shape how consumers, businesses, governments and militaries around the world communicate. Today, the Company is developing the ultimate global communications network to power high-quality, secure, affordable, fast connections to impact people's lives anywhere they are—on the ground, in the air or at sea. To learn more about Viasat, visit: www.viasat.com, go to [Viasat's Corporate Blog](#), or follow the Company on social media at: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) or [YouTube](#).

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