

THE BRAZILIAN SPACE PROGRAM

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Abstract. The Brazilian Space Program has developed along three main lines in the past decade. Design and construction of space vehicles, starting with small suborbital launchers till a small satellite launcher belonging to the so called VLS-1 family. This activity is performed in the Instituto de Aeronautica e Espaço - IAE - under the direct administration of the Ministry of Defense. The second branch deals with design and construction of satellites under the responsibility of the Instituto de Pesquisas Espaciais -INPE - an organization under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Presently there are two small satellites, SCD-1 and SCD-2, orbiting the Earth in low, equatorial orbit designed to collect meteorological data transmitted by platforms installed throughout the Brazilian territory and on the ocean. The cooperation program with China, aimed to put in orbit earth observation satellites is one of the most successful experience in international cooperation. Two of those satellites, CBERS-1 and CBERS-2, are already under operation and two more are planned within the scope of the CBERS project. The third branch is the Launch Center of Alcantara under the administration of Air Force Department in the Ministry of Defense. This Center will have their activities substantially enhanced with the coming cooperation with Ukraine that includes the launching of the space vehicle Cyclone-4 from that Center. Since a few years ago applications from space technology have increased rapidly. Most of these activities are concentrated at INPE and the Center for Weather Forecasting and Climate Studies - CPTEC. We are stimulating an intensification of earth observation research and activities at INPE in partnership with Universities and Research Centers. The present administration is also aware that a more intense participation of universities is essential to accelerate the Brazilian Space Program and intends to increase the research budget oriented to sponsor this activity. Also industry participation in the Brazilian Space Program has been modest and we intend to increase the acquisition of equipments and instrumentation from the aerospace industry. Finally it is important to mention international cooperation. There are several cooperation programs going on with several countries, particularly with Argentine, France, Germany, Russia, United States besides China and Ukraine.