AI artificial intelligence STRATEGY

Colleagues,

The NRO has a proud history of successfully fulfilling a demanding mission. As a result, we've always been willing to think differently and embrace what's over the horizon.

Today, our mission is more challenging than ever – driven by a host of forces including technological advancement, the rapid pace of innovation, ever-evolving threats, and intensifying stakeholder demands. These forces are converging to create once-in-a-generation changes in how we work, develop and acquire new technologies, apply innovation, and partner with the commercial marketplace.

This strategy is the NRO's formal articulation of how we intend to deploy artificial intelligence (AI) for competitive advantage in the face of these forces to achieve our mission. Note that it touches upon a range of areas on which the NRO's leadership team is acutely focused, including our intention to invest in our people.

In the face of these generational changes, every NRO employee, myself included, can draw strength from the fact that we stand on the shoulders of the outstanding individuals who went before us. To ensure mission success, our predecessors courageously pushed into new areas of technology, innovated for competitive advantage, and thought differently about the future.

Such is the challenge and the exciting call before us when it comes to AI. I look forward to walking this journey with you.

Best regards,

Dr. Chris Scolese
Director, National Reconnaissance Office

PURPOSE

The NRO is committed to adopting AI rapidly and responsibly across the organization, deploying it in ways that enhance the human capacity to innovate, strengthen decision making and improve mission outcomes.

VISION

The NRO seamlessly leverages AI to see, hear and sense human and natural activity across the Earth from the vantage point of space, rapidly curating and sharing reliable information with customers to enable superior decision advantage and mission success.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

As we pursue our purpose and vision, we will:

- put the NRO's **workforce** first, which includes developing AI training relevant to employee roles and experiences and providing career-enhancing opportunities;
- deploy the transformative power of AI across all NRO mission areas to **innovate** faster while securing and expanding the U.S. intelligence advantage;
- design and implement AI risk and governance architectures to ensure the **responsive, agile,** ethical and effective use of AI at scale across the NRO;
- invest in leading AI services and capabilities to ensure maximum **resilience** in meeting the needs of our customers and the expectations of our stakeholders; and
- leverage our **partnerships** to identify, prioritize and implement the highest-value, mission-supporting applications of AI.

2030 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

PEOPLE

The NRO will recruit, hire and retain a world-class workforce with access to AI training and career opportunities.

- Define and develop AI-specific work roles, position descriptions, and competencies consistent with federal AI guidance and NRO priorities.
- Develop a market-competitive, AI-focused recruitment and retention strategy.
- Develop and implement an AI-specific continuous learning program.
- Create programs and vehicles that allow AI knowledge to be effectively shared across the organization.

ENABLING TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

The NRO will acquire and implement the tools and technologies – and create the communications and culture change – necessary to ensure the comprehensive and ethical adoption of AI across the organization.

- Streamline and standardize AI acquisition processes to increase speed, lower barriers to adoption, and reduce costs.
- Build an AI narrative and support it with a steady rhythm of communications that showcase relevant AI successes, development programs, people, capabilities and mission successes.

DATA MANAGEMENT

The NRO will develop and implement an AI data strategy that provides confidence that AI data is of high quality, trusted and organized for efficient sharing, with effective internal controls to guide its management.

- Develop the necessary programs and processes to ensure that data to be used in AI tools is secure, trusted, accessible and relevant to its application across the organization.
- Collaborate with partners to make certain the NRO's AI-enabled data can be efficiently and effectively shared and used across their respective AI systems.
- Build strong cross-directorate, cross-office collaboration so that the treatment and use of AI data is consistent with existing NRO data strategies and the achievement of mission objectives.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The NRO will develop the necessary risk management architecture to support effective and ethical use of AI.

- Develop the risk management procedures, inspection and testing protocols, and reporting structures, necessary to ensure the organization's acquisition, handling and use of AI data is consistent with federal guidelines, applicable laws, and the NRO's mission, culture and values.

GOVERNANCE

The NRO will collaborate with its partners and develop policies and procedures to ensure the legal, ethical and trustworthy use of AI.

- Establish an AI governance framework and ensure all employees are appropriately informed and trained.
- Regularly test and inspect the NRO's AI policies and practices to ensure they are consistent with federal law, presidential executive orders, and Intelligence Community and Department of Defense policies.
- Create an AI shared services capability that functions as an information clearinghouse and source for expertise, guidance and success practices.

What we mean by AI

AI is a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. Artificial intelligence systems use machine- and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments; abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner; and use model inference to formulate options for information or action. [EO14110]