



**DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY**  
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President Eisenhower established the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) 50 years ago in response to the Soviet Union's *Sputnik* launch, which surprised and embarrassed the United States as the Soviets became the first nation to successfully launch a satellite into space. ARPA became DARPA in 1972 when "Defense" was added to its name.

DARPA's original charter charged the Agency to direct and perform "certain advanced research and development projects," with the primary mission of ensuring the United States would never again be surprised by another nation's technological advancement. This mission has evolved over time: Today, DARPA's mission is to prevent technological surprise for our Armed Forces and create technological surprise for our adversaries.

DARPA accomplishes its mission by demonstrating that new technical ideas are possible. Once we've done that, some people may still choose not to embrace the new technology, but they can no longer say the idea is impossible.

This publication outlines some of the many examples of DARPA successfully accomplishing its mission over the last 50 years. It also contains articles on current research efforts that hold the promise to be future successes.

I am honored to serve as Director as DARPA enters its sixth decade. The world is as dangerous today as it was in 1958—perhaps even more so—and the urgency of maintaining technological surprise is as acute as ever. Everyone at DARPA has a personal commitment to continuing to deliver revolutionary technologies in support of our men and women in uniform, and we look forward to many more years of demonstrating what can be done

I hope you enjoy reading about DARPA's accomplishments. If it inspires you with an idea that could lead to new technology not available today, please send it to us. DARPA program managers are always willing to take risks on innovative ideas. Better yet, consider becoming a program manager yourself.



Tony Tether