



Satellite Update October 2018

Traffic lights to support the growth of the UK's space industry

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) has launched a "new traffic light" system to streamline the licensing process for satellite operators.

We have seen huge technology developments in the last few years. Innovative technology, however, can often be difficult to regulate. It does not fit into traditional models of regulation and brings new types of risks and challenges to regulators. But such technology can also lead to huge commercial and social benefits and keep the UK ahead of its international competitors.

Responding to industry suggestions, the UKSA is adapting aspects of its regulatory framework through its new traffic light system for licences.

Traffic Light System

The new system, which has already been piloted, is a pre-application process for satellite operators. It offers prospective applicants an early and quick indication of the likelihood that their mission could be licensed by the UKSA by providing a red/amber/green rating and advice on what modifications would be required to obtain a licence:

- **Green** - low-risk: likely that the application will be successful
- **Amber** - more information is needed for the UKSA to understand the risks, or modifications are required
- **Red** - the mission is deemed to be too high-risk to be licensed

The system may also result in a tailored, more streamlined application process particularly for repeat applications for identical or near-identical missions, such as for constellations.

The approach will now be offered to, but is not compulsory for, all prospective licence applicants. It is expected to be particularly helpful to new entrants to the UK space sector. All new operators and those wishing to launch new types of mission are encouraged to make use of it.

We are pleased to see this policy now being published and believe that it responds well to comments that have been raised in recent years by industry.

Please contact us if you would like more information on the traffic light system.



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