

Regulatory Briefing – April 2020

Europe

United Kingdom

UKSA and ESA launches an open call for proposals “Space helping UK on COVID-19 and other pandemics”

In a joint initiative with the European Space Agency, the UK Space Agency has made available an initial £2.6 million to fund a number of projects to develop solutions in support of the NHS using space-enabled technologies with particular focus on the following areas:

- logistics within the health delivery system such as using drones to deliver test kits, masks, gowns and googles;
- managing infectious disease outbreaks;
- population health and wellbeing;
- recovering health system function and handling backlogs after the crisis; and
- preparedness for future epidemics.

Details of the application process can be found [here](#).

United States

US issues an Executive Order on Encouraging International Support for the Recovery and Use of Space Resources

On 6 April 2020, President Trump signed the ‘Executive Order on Encouraging International Support for the Recovery and Use of Space Resources’ (**Order**) which:

- sets out that the US does not view outer space as “a global commons” and would “encourage international support for the public and private recovery and use of resources in outer space, consistent with applicable law” (Section 1);

- directs the Secretary of State to object to any attempt to treat the Moon Agreement 1979 as “reflecting or otherwise expressing customary international law” (Section 2);
- directs the Secretary of State to seek to negotiate joint statements and bilateral and multilateral arrangements with other countries regarding “safe and sustainable operations for the public and private recovery and use of space resources” (Section 3); and
- directs activities under Section 3 to be reported to the President no later than 180 days after the date of the Order (Section 4).

FCC to hold an open meeting to discuss Mitigation of Orbital Debris in the New Space Age

The Federal Communications Commission (**FCC**) will be holding an open meeting on 23 April 2020 in which it will consider multiple items, including the [Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Mitigation of Orbital Debris in the New Space Age](#), which was made publicly available on 2 April 2020 in advance of the open meeting.

The content of the Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking document includes the:

- incorporation of thresholds to revise existing application disclosure rules such as risk of collision, probability of successful disposal and casualty risk associated with the re-entry of satellites;
- adoption of a requirement that all satellites must be equipped with sufficient manoeuvrability to perform collision avoidance manoeuvres during any period when the satellite is in an orbit that is above the ISS;

- update on disclosure requirements related to limiting collision risk, protecting inhabitable spacecraft, manoeuvrability, use of deployment devices, release of persistent liquids and proximity operations;
- codification of informational requirements for GEO satellite licence extensions and limiting the duration of such extensions to a maximum of 5 years per extension;
- clarification on existing high-level FCC requirements regarding maintaining control of authorised stations, including for satellite command communications;
- adoption of a requirement that licensees indemnify the US for costs associated with any claims brought against the US under international space treaties;
- application of the revised rules; and
- proposal of a bond requirement for GEO and non-GEO orbit space stations associated with successful post-mission disposal.

The 23 April 2020 open meeting will take place between 10:30am and 12:30pm EDT and be accessible to the public on the FCC's YouTube channel and at <https://www.fcc.gov/general/live>.

Middle East

Armenia

Armenian President signs a package of space activity legislation into law

On 26 March 2020, the Armenian President signed into law a package of space activity legislation that amend existing laws and regulations to expand and regulate state and commercial space activities in Armenia.

The legislative package regulates the relations related to the organisation and implementation of space activities in Armenia and addresses aspects such as a government entity to oversee and coordinate Armenian space activities, licensing

and regulation of space activities (which include the acceptance and processing of remote sensing data) as well as insurance and state indemnification requirements.

UAE

UAE Space Agency kicks off virtual programmes, including the Global Space Industry Accelerator programme

In collaboration with Krypto Labs, an innovation hub based in Abu Dhabi, the UAE Space Agency have commenced a series of webinars from 8 April 2020 to cover topics such as space entrepreneurship and advice on how to achieve success in the space industry based on case studies.

The UAE Space Agency will also hold a roadshow for the NewSpace Innovation Programme, the Space Bootcamp and the incubation programme online.

Asia

Thailand

Thailand passes legislation updating its existing legal framework to regulate landing rights

Thailand's Act on Organization to Assign Radio Frequency and to Regulate the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Services (No. 3) B.E. 2562 (2019) (**Act**) entered into force in 2019, revising the previous Act on Organization to Assign Radio Frequency and to Regulate the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Services B.E. 2553 (2010).

The new Act directs the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission to act as the sole agency responsible for allocation of radio spectrum frequencies and supervision of broadcasting, and telecommunication services. The new Act also creates a licensing regime to use frequency spectrum and addresses landing rights, orbital slots and ground segment.

International

ITU publishes the Final Acts of WRC-19

On 31 March 2020, the ITU published the Final Acts of the World Radio Conference 2019 (WRC-19) which is available [here](#).

The Final Acts constitute a record of the decisions taken at WRC-19 that comprises both the new and revised provisions of the Radio Regulations including all Appendices and the new and revised Resolutions and Recommendations approved by WRC-19. Statements made by Member States at the time of signing the Final Acts are also included.

The Hague International Space Resources Governance Working Group publishes Commentary on the Building Blocks for the Development of an International Framework on Space Resources

On 3 April 2020, the Hague International Space Resources Governance Working Group (**Working Group**) announced the publication of the [Commentary on the Building Blocks for the Development of an International Framework for the Governance of Space Resources Activities \(Building Blocks\)](#), which includes background information on the developments of the Working Group and the formulation of the Building Blocks.

This is following the Working Group's adoption of 20 Building Blocks on 12 November 2019 which were designed to provide a foundation that States, international organisations and non-governmental entities can consider and to encourage the development of an international framework.



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