

Regulatory Briefing – April 2021

Europe

United Kingdom

Draft regulations to implement the Space Industry Act 2018 (SIA) to be laid before Parliament

The draft secondary regulations to implement the SIA will be laid before Parliament on 24 May 2021.

The SIA will regulate the following activities carried out from the UK:

- launch (space or sub-orbital) and return;
- the procurement of a UK launch (space or sub-orbital);
- the operation of a satellite in orbit;
- the operation of a spaceport; and
- the provision of range control services.

The Cabinet Office publishes its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy

On the 16 March 2021, the Cabinet Office published [the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#), titled Global Britain in a competitive age (Integrated Review).

The Integrated Review sets out the UK Government’s vision for the UK’s role in the world over the next decade and the actions to be taken by 2025. It outlines the Government’s intention to embrace cyber and space as newer domains and to have a “dynamic space programme” through an integrated national space strategy to bring together military and civil space policy for the first time, with the establishment of a new Space Command and the development of a commercial launch capability from the UK by 2022.

The Integrated Review also highlights the importance of using regulatory diplomacy to influence the rules, norms and standards to shape internationally responsible behaviours in space such as:

- by protecting the space environment and supporting the growth of the UK space industry to realise economic benefits and extend the UK’s influence in the global space domain; and
- by increasing international collaboration across the UK’s space-related objectives through continuing the UK’s participation in the European Union’s Copernicus Earth observation programme and working with national space agencies.

The UK Government establishes the UK Space Command

On 1 April 2021, [the UK Space Command](#) was established, which is to be a Joint Command, staffed from all three branches of the armed forces, as well as the Civil Service and key members of the commercial space industry.

The UK Space Command brings together three main functions: space operations; space workforce training and growth; and space capability, with the aim of developing and delivering space equipment programmes.

The UK Space Command is to receive directions from the National Space Council through the Ministry of Defence Space Directorate and is to work with the UK Space Agency (UKSA) to deliver joint national capability, where required.

The UK Space Command will work closely with the Strategic Command and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory for the development of new national space capabilities. The UK Space Command will also be responsible for providing command and control of all defence space capabilities when it is fully operational capable.

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The UK Government publishes an updated guidance on satellite licence fees for constellation operators

On 16 March 2021, the UKSA, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Department for Transport and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy published [guidance on satellite licence fees for constellation operators](#) under the Outer Space Act 1986 (OSA) and SIA.

The updated fees scheme for satellite operators applying for repeat licensing under the OSA and the SIA will take effect from 1 April 2021 via a refund scheme.

Under the newly established refund scheme, the application fee for single satellite licences will continue to be fixed at £6,500 per licence. Where repeat licensing occurs, an annual refund will be made to operators by applying a set of refund bands to reduce licensing costs. The annual refund amount will be based on total licence applications submitted over an initial 12-month rolling period, with the period commencing after a satellite operator submits its first licence application. Refund decisions will be taken on 31 March of each year and the relevant refund will be issued in April of the next financial year.

Number of licence applications submitted	Current fee (per licence)	Proposed constellation fee (per licence)	Refund (per licence)
201+ licences	£6,500	£5,400	£1,100
151-200 licences	£6,500	£5,700	£800
100-150 licences	£6,500	£6,200	£300
< 100 licences	£6,500	£6,500	£0

The UK provides funding to support the UNOOSA Long-term Sustainability Guidelines

The UK Government provided funding to the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs’ (UNOOSA) [Promoting Space Sustainability Project](#), which seeks to raise global awareness of the importance of ensuring sustainable use of space.

The Promoting Space Sustainability Project is delivered in the context of [the Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability Outer Space Activities \(LTS Guidelines\)](#) which were adopted by the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2019.

The LTS Guidelines are composed of a preamble and 21 voluntary guidelines under four themes:

- policy and regulatory framework for space activities;
- safety of space operations;
- international cooperation, capacity-building and awareness; and
- scientific and technical research and development.

UKSA's Space for All funding scheme opens

On 10 March 2021, the UKSA launched its ‘Space for All’ community funding scheme for the financial year 2021/22, which is aimed at supporting the education and outreach aims and objectives of the UKSA by offering small grants of up to a maximum of £10,000 for each award.

The UKSA anticipates making at least £65,000 available under this funding scheme. The deadline for the submission of proposals is 5pm (BST) on 30 April 2021.

More information on the ‘Space for All’ community funding scheme can be found [here](#).

Ofcom publishes its Statement on Plan of Work for 2021/22

On 26 March 2021, Ofcom published its [Plan of Work](#) for the financial year 2021/22, which sets out a number of strategic priorities for the next 12 months. These include:

- working with the Government to ensure communications providers can adhere to their security obligations, such as issuing guidance on the [draft Telecommunications \(Security\) Bill](#) and the [Draft Electronic Communications \(Security Measures\) Regulations](#);

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- providing a better online licensing platform to deliver an efficient spectrum licensing service;
- developing a strategic spectrum roadmap to ensure access to spectrum to enable innovation and reflect market, technology and international developments and to inform Ofcom’s international position in preparation for the World Radiocommunications Conference 2023;
- working to ensure people and businesses can access key communications services – including in the hardest to reach locations; and
- preparing to regulate online harms by setting out how Ofcom sees the online safety regime working in practice when the draft Online Safety Bill is published following the Government’s response to the consultation on the [Online Harms White Paper](#).

DIT launches a consultation on the UK’s export control regime

The Department for International Trade (DIT) launched a consultation for the Export Control Joint Unit to consider making appropriate improvements or changes to the existing export control licensing regime to ensure that the UK’s export controls regime can help reinvigorate the space sector’s exports which have been adversely affected by COVID-19. This consultation is being run under the DIT’s Space Sector COVID Support Plan.

More information on the consultation can be found [here](#).

The deadline for the submission of a response is 27 April 2021.

European Space Agency (ESA)

ESA releases its Agenda for 2025

On 7 April 21, the ESA published the [ESA Agenda 2025](#) which sets out its five immediate priorities and a vision for the next four years.

ESA’s five priorities for 2025 are as follows:

- strengthening the connection between the ESA and the European Union (EU) to develop a joint ambition for space in Europe and to implement EU space programmes;
- boosting commercial space activities by being more forceful, dynamic and quick in its interaction with start-ups and other companies;
- strengthening space safety and security through its space programmes;
- reinforcing the ESA’s unique ability to implement complex and ambitious space programmes with industry; and
- organising its internal processes with ESA Member States.

United States

FCC proposes Commercial Space Launch Spectrum Availability

The [proposed rules and further notice on making spectrum available for commercial space launches](#) is to be voted on at the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) next open meeting, which will be held on 21 April 2021.

Under the FCC’s current regulatory framework, the spectrum which is used for space launches is allocated exclusively for federal agency uses and commercial space launch operators must apply for and receive Special Temporary Authority from the FCC on an ad-hoc basis to share the federal spectrum to carry out their launch activities.

The proposed rules aim to adopt a new spectrum allocation in the 2200-2290 MHz band as a non-federal secondary allocation limited to the use of transmissions from space launch vehicles during pre-launch testing and space launch operations.

A live webcast of the open meeting will be accessible using this [link](#).

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Africa

Rwanda

Rwandan legislature approves law establishing Rwanda Space Agency

On 10 March 2021, Rwanda’s Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Rwanda’s national legislature, approved the law establishing the Rwanda Space Agency (RSA).

The RSA’s responsibilities will include:

- advising the Rwandan government on implementing national and international space laws and policies;
- providing geospatial services for development activities across various domains such as agriculture, weather forecasts, emergency response and urban planning; and
- coordinating national efforts to build a knowledge base in space and related technologies through training.

Asia

South Korea

South Korea to develop its national space programme

On 25 March 2021, South Korean President, Jae-In Moon announced the government’s ambition to develop and support national space programme to:

- foster commercial space industry;
- launch a first robotic lunar lander on a domestically developed rocket by 2030; and
- develop a pilot network of communication satellites to support 6G.



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