

Regulatory Briefing – January 2022

International

James Webb Space Telescope launched

The most powerful space telescope ever built was launched on an Ariane 5 Rocket from French Guiana on Christmas Day (GMT).

The mission reflects the shared efforts of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, European Space Agency (ESA) and Canadian Space Agency. The United Kingdom (UK) led the European Consortium in building the Mid InfraRed Instrument, which allows the Telescope to capture faint light from the distant stars.

The James Webb Space Telescope will allow astronomers to study the beginning of the universe, opening the possibility of understanding how stars are born and life develops.

The Telescope reached full deployment on 8 January. The first images produced by the Telescope will be made available to the public in Summer 2022.

Europe

ESA and UK fail to agree about the future of the UK's involvement in Copernicus

The European Union (EU) and the UK failed to meet their 30 November deadline for UK participation and financial support of EU-funded Copernicus projects, the joint EU and ESA Earth observation programme.

The potential lack of UK funding would pose a €750 million (GBP 623 million) shortfall for Copernicus and impact six new Earth science missions.

Josef Aschbacher, Director General of ESA, proposed to "keep the door open and postpone the decision point into the future".

He stated, "with some arrangements and negotiations with industry, we could push this date into 2024, which would give us three more years to negotiate and... find the 750 million." However, Aschbacher affirmed that "the participation of the UK is still a priority and [ESA's] preferred option."

Two consortia announced to develop European satellite constellations

The European Commission (EC) awarded two consortia €1.4 million (GBP 1.2 million) each to design the future of Europe's satellite constellations.

The first consortium, New Symphonie, consists of 22 companies led by Euroconsult and Unseenlabs. The second consortium, UN: IO, consists of 14 companies led by Isar Aerospace, Mynaric and Reflex Aerospace.

In six months' time the consortia will present their designs. The EC hopes that the constellations will lead to the development of a sovereign European communications infrastructure.

UK

UKSA "Space for All" applications open

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) has opened applications to its 2022-2023 "Space for All" community funding scheme.

UKSA will award grants of up to £10,000 to applicants with projects that support the education and outreach aims set out in its 2016 Education, Skills and Outreach Strategy.

Through these projects, UKSA hopes to improve awareness of the UK space programme, address the needs of the UK space sector and promote STEM literacy.

Applications are due on 18 February 2022. Applicants are asked to propose projects that can be completed by 31 March 2023.

"Unparalleled expertise in all aspects of space and satellite regulation and financing". Legal500 2021

Ofcom publishes proposed plan of work for 2022/2023

The Office of Communications (**Ofcom**) published its proposed plan of work for the 2022/2023 financial year.

The plan identifies the following seven objectives as key priorities:

- investment in strong, secure networks;
- "getting everyone connected";
- fairness for customers;
- enabling wireless services in the broader economy;
- supporting and developing UK media;
- serving and protecting audiences; and
- establishing regulation of online safety.

Ofcom welcomes responses from stakeholders and the public. All responses should be submitted by 9 February 2022, and a final plan will be released in March 2022.

North America

United States

US and ESA support continuation of the ISS

The Biden administration has formally announced its intention to support the operation of the International Space Station (**ISS**) through 2030.

NASA supported the declaration and said that it would work with the station's partners, Canada, ESA, Japan, and Russia, "to enable the continuation of the ground-breaking research being conducted in this unique orbiting laboratory through the rest of this decade".

In response, Josef Aschbacher tweeted, "I welcome this announcement & will submit a proposal to Member States for @esa to continue until 2030, as well".

Unlike ESA, Russia has vocalised concerns about the ability of the ISS to operate beyond 2024. Russia has also expressed a desire to develop its own Russian national space station in place of its partnership with the ISS.

Mexico

Mexico joins the Artemis Accords

Mexico has become the 14th country to sign the Artemis Accords. The American-led international agreement promotes the return of human space flight and the safe and sustainable development of space.

American Vice President and recent chair of the National Space Council, Kamala Harris, lauded Mexico's decision to join the Accords.

Other signatories include traditional partners to the US in space, such as Canada and the UK, and emerging space nations like Brazil and the United Arab Emirates.

Asia

Malaysia

Malaysia outlines national space blueprint with focus on remote sensing satellite development

At a recent parliamentary hearing, Deputy Minister Datuk Ahmad Amzad Hashim shared that the soon-to-released Malaysian national space blueprint will outline a 10-year plan for executing Malaysia's "National Space Policy 2030".

The blueprint will emphasise the importance of developing remote-sensing satellite manufacturing and creating satellite data-driven downstream services.

Alongside the release of the blueprint, for which a publishing date has not yet been announced, Hashim stated that Malaysia would seek memoranda of understanding with "agencies of excellence in developed countries in the field of space technology".

"Unparalleled expertise in all aspects of space and satellite regulation and financing". Legal500 2021

Japan

Japan set to revise its space policy roadmap

At a recent Strategic Headquarters for Space Development meeting, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced his intention to submit a revised space policy roadmap to his cabinet for approval.

Amongst other measures, Kishida called for greater cooperation between Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and the private sector. Kishida set a goal of sending a Japanese astronaut to the moon as part of the US-led Artemis program by the end of the decade. To date, Canada is the only signatory of the Artemis Accords that has managed to secure a seat for one of its astronauts.

India

India and Russia agree to strengthen cooperation in space

As a part of a broader defence and trade discussion, on 6 December, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to strengthen their countries' cooperation in space.

The leaders discussed collaborating on a human spaceflight programme, developing launch vehicles and the peaceful use and exploration of space.

Africa

South Africa

South Africa and China signs MoU on satellite navigation cooperation

The South African National Space Agency (SANSa) and China Satellite Navigation Office (CSNO) announced on 3 December that they had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on satellite navigation cooperation.

SANSa and CSNO pledged to work together to develop satellite navigation technology and

research the applications of the Chinese BeiDou Navigation Satellite System.

Mmbonene Moefe, Director General of the South African Department of Science and Innovation, the organisation which facilitated the MoU, stated, "this is an exciting endeavour for the country as greater investment and support to the space engineering industry will mean growth in scarce engineering skills, strengthening of the knowledge economy and support to government's goal of addressing poverty through unemployment".

Egypt

Egypt and Ukraine sign MoU on space cooperation

The Egyptian Space Agency and the State Space Agency of Ukraine signed an MoU on space cooperation.

The MoU seeks to promote the peaceful use of outer space and the mutual exchange of resources and research. The MoU also encourages workshops and training of Egyptian specialists.

Oceania

Australia

Australia and South Korea sign MoU on space cooperation

On 10 December, the Korea Aerospace Research Institute and the Australian Space Agency have signed an MoU to cooperate on space exploration, launch services and satellite navigation

The two nations further agreed to share personnel and space infrastructure and exchange views on space policy and legislation development.

If you would like more information on any topics in this Regulatory Briefing, please contact orrery@wearealden.com.