

Regulatory Briefing – February 2022

International

UNOOSA and Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre announce opportunity for satellite payload hosting

The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (**UNOOSA**) and the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (**MBRSC**), a research institution in the United Arab Emirates (**UAE**) and home to the UAE National Space Programme, has announced a new payload hosting initiative focused on providing opportunities to developing United Nation member states.

The initiative is a part of UNOOSA's Access to Space for All programme, which aims to develop technical abilities, engineering processes and infrastructure to support satellite development and space exploration.

MBRSC will provide a 12U spacecraft platform and ground station for the initiative, and the member states selected will deliver tested payloads. The opportunity is designed to boost the social and economic development of the member state.

Europe

The European Commission, European Investment Bank and European Investment Bank launch a €1 billion investment fund for space SMEs

On 25 January, officials from the European Commission, European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund agreed to commit at least €1 billion (£947 million) to develop Cassini, a programme that will facilitate European financing for European small and medium-sized space companies. Cassini will also offer competitions and mentoring to entrepreneurs.

The signatories expressed concern that companies are leaving Europe for countries like the United States for support. Cassini aims to reverse this trend and change how private investors in Europe perceive the space sector.

A joint statement was also released by the European Union, European Space Agency, and European Investment Fund at the European Space Conference in Brussels supporting the endeavour.

United Kingdom

The UK publishes Defence Space Strategy

Following the publication of the National Space Strategy in Autumn of last year, the United Kingdom (**UK**) released its Defence Space Strategy (**DSS**) on 1 February.

The DSS commits the UK to investing €1.4 billion over the next 10 years developing cutting-edge space technology with military and civilian applications.

The DSS features three strategic priorities:

- protect and defend the UK's interests in space;
- integrate space into defence operations; and
- develop a new generation of space experts capable of facing future threats.

UK Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin, asserted that the DSS is necessary to ward off future terrestrial and space-based threats. He stated, "We know of the threat. Several states are pursuing hostile approaches when looking at space".

However, Minister Quin maintained that the UK's "absolute objective is to prevent a war in space. We want to establish proper norms in space...we are about the safe exploitation of space to the benefit of all".

Ofcom releases proposal to vary aircraft and aircraft radiocommunications licences

The Office of Communications (**Ofcom**), which licenses the use of radio equipment on board aircraft, has issued a proposal to vary aircraft and aircraft (transportable) licences.

The changes proposed will:

- update and align the structure and content in current licences with the style and standard terms and conditions applicable to other licence types; and
- update and simplify the information held by Ofcom on aircraft and radio equipment in their licensing database.

"Pre-eminent in the space and satellite sector". Chambers & Partners 2022

Ofcom has proposed these changes to align its aircraft registration details with those held by the Civil Aviation Authority and make the licensing documentation process easier to manage for applicants.

Comments on the proposal are requested by 20 February. Ofcom will publish their decision on their website no later than 18 March. If Ofcom decides to proceed with their proposal, they will begin issuing new licences to all affected licensees.

UK space clusters receive funding

Over £600,000 of funding from the UK Space Agency (UKSA) will be distributed amongst ten regional hubs, known as space clusters, across the UK. The clusters will use the funding to support new and developing companies in the region, encouraging the creation of jobs and new business opportunities.

Dr Paul Bate, Chief Executive of the UKSA, said: "We are building on our strengths in space, such as satellite manufacturing, while supporting emerging markets like in-orbit servicing, to unlock the growth in the UK space sector and help level up the economy".

New funding for sustainable development of space

Fulfilling the promise of the National Space Strategy to make the UK the lead in making space sustainable, the UKSA has pledged £1.7 million to 13 projects led by industry and academia designed to help track and remove debris in space.

Science Minister George Freeman emphasized the importance of the funding, stating, "These projects will help put the UK at the forefront of both protecting the space environment for future activity, and accelerating UK technology leadership".

Middle East

Israel

Israel becomes 15th nation to join the Artemis Accords

Israel has become the 15th country to join the Artemis Accords. The American-led international agreement promotes the return of human space flight and the safe and sustainable development of space.

In a signing ceremony on 26 January, attended virtually by NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, Israel Space Agency Director-General Uri Oron stated, "I am proud to sign the Artemis Accords. Israel has officially joined this ground-breaking project, led by NASA, to reinstate manned flights to the moon in upcoming years".

Asia

China

China presents space plans and priorities in new white paper

China has released its once-every-five-years plans for space exploration. Published on 28 January, the white paper details ambitions to develop a national space law, enhance its space transportation capabilities, strengthen its space infrastructure and research landing astronauts on the moon by the end of the decade.

In contrast to past plans, the white paper places greater emphasis on the importance of China's commercial activities. In 2014, China underwent a policy change that opened up the space sector to private capital. Over the last five years, China's launch rates have more than doubled, some of which were private, illustrating the strength of the policy and emerging sector.

The white paper does not address China's space-related military intentions or ambitions to build a large satellite broadband constellation.

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