

55th IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Recent Developments in Space Law (5)

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ANOTHER ADDITION TO NATIONAL SPACE LEGISLATION: THE AUSTRIAN OUTER SPACE
ACT, ADOPTED 6 DECEMBER 2011

Abstract

On December 6, 2011, the Austrian Parliament unanimously adopted the Bundesgesetz über die Genehmigung von Weltraumaktivitäten und die Einrichtung eines Weltraumregisters (Weltraumgesetz), or Austrian Space Act. Thus, Austria became the sixth EU member state and one of more than a dozen globally adopting a comprehensive national act focusing on national activities related to or in outer space, and more specifically the prospect of fundamental private participation therein. Following the same analytical approach as with regard to: • the Swedish and UK national acts (“The Swedish and British Space Acts and Private Commercial Enterprise under Public International Law”, *Memoria, Conferencia Espacial de las Americas* (1991), 336-42); • the South African Space Affairs Act (“South Africa in Space: the New Space Affairs Act of 1993”, *23 Journal of Space Law* (1995), 195-7); • that same act plus the national Russian space law (“Two New National Space Laws: Russia and South Africa”, in *Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space* (1996), 251-61); • the Australian Space Activities Act (“Launching from “Down Under”: The New Australian Space Activities Act of 1998”, in *Proceedings of the Forty-Third Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space* (2001), 132-41); • the Ukrainian law (“Ukrainian national space law from an international perspective”, *18 Space Policy* (2002), 15-23, with S.A. Negoda); • the Norwegian act (“Vikings First in National Space Law: Other Europeans to Follow – The Continuing Story Of National Implementation Of International Responsibility And Liability”, in *Proceedings of the Forty-Fourth Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space* (2002), 111-21, with A. Nikolaisen); • the Brazilian legislation (“Launching Alcantara into the global space economy – The 2001 Brazilian national space law”, in *Proceedings of the Forty-Fifth Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space* (2003), 310-20) and, finally; • the Dutch national space law (“Implementing the United Nations Outer Space Treaties – The Case of the Netherlands”, in *Proceedings of the Forty-Seventh Colloquium on the Law of Outer Space* (2005), 139-45); the present paper will analyse this most recent national space law principally from the perspective of international space law, notably focusing on the domestic implementation via a licensing regime of international responsibilities and liabilities potentially incurred by Austria and the use by the latter of its jurisdictional tools to authorise and supervise them.