

66th International Astronautical Congress 2015

SYMPOSIUM ON COMMERCIAL SPACEFLIGHT SAFETY ISSUES (D6)  
Commercial Space Flight Safety and Emerging Issues (1)

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL LAWS GOVERNING LAUNCH SAFETY

**Abstract**

A growing number of States are becoming space-faring nations. In order to fulfill their international obligations, to protect their citizens from harm, to protect their treasuries from liability, while encouraging and fostering the development of commercial space activities, many States are enacting national space legislation, establishing governmental space regulatory institutions and giving them jurisdiction to license private actors and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Legislation and regulation is an important means of providing certainty, stability and predictability of the legal regime essential for commercial investment. Licensing also is important as a governmental seal of approval to facilitate equity investment and finance of commercial space enterprise, and to assuage customers' concerns about the safety of aerospace vehicles and rockets. Some States regulate the launch site, some regulate the launch provider, and still others may regulate the satellite operator. This essay will provide a comparative analysis of the safety regulatory regimes governing commercial space development.