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UNITED KINGDOM'S APPROACH TO REGULATING COMMERCIAL SPACEFLIGHT SAFETY

Abstract

In March 2011, the British Government articulated its ambition to "become the European centre for space tourism" and "next generation 'hybrid' space planes". In June 2017, the Space Industry Bill was outlined in the Queen's Speech, which was a clear signal of the UK's commitment to realisation of the initial plan. One of the aims of the Bill is to create a comprehensive regulatory framework to manage risk associated with commercial spaceflights.

The Bill promotes commercial spaceflight safety by introducing provisions for the purposes of granting spaceport and operator licences and for securing the safe operation of spaceports, mission management facilities and spaceflight activities. Moreover, it covers the issues of insurance, indemnity and liability.

This article provides an analysis of the impact of the Bill on the commercial spaceflight safety regulations and standards, and puts it in context of the provisions that already exist on international and national levels.