

IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Dispute Settlement (2)

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USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE SPACE LAW EDUCATION AND DISPUTE SETTLEMENT:
DEVELOPING STELLAR DECISIS, THE ANIMATED SPACE LAW MOOT COURT EDUCATIONAL
SERIES

Abstract

In this paper, Christopher Hearsey, Nathan Johnson, and Nivedita Raju explore the future of dispute settlement in space and space law education through storytelling using a multi-episode educational series called Stellar Decisis. Stellar Decisis is an animated space law moot court educational series produced by the Space Court Foundation (SCF). Launched on July 20, 2021, on SCF's YouTube channel, Stellar Decisis explores space and international law themes through the lens of future dispute settlement using a fictitious court that operates in space. Our paper will discuss the production and lessons learned from the production of Stellar Decisis, highlight educational modules relating to each episode that promote space law education and the rule of law, and we include results from a survey of space professionals, scholars, and practitioners relating to their expectations of dispute settlement mechanisms needed to address issues arising from current and future space activities.

The format of Stellar Decisis focuses heavily on interesting and provocative space law themes told through the court's judges who are experts in the subject matter of the case. The pilot episode serves as the court's first case where the court takes up the issue of whether and the extent to which a country on Earth may protect itself from the certainty of an asteroid strike on its territory by unilaterally launching nuclear weapons to destroy the asteroid threat, which subsequently causes extremely high economic losses on the Moon and in cislunar space. The series brings together the space law community, scholars and practicing space lawyers to resolve the dispute in the fictional "Space Court". The format of the episodes include a recitation of the facts through news reports, arguments by agents for the applicant and respondent, and finally a discussion and resolution of the case by the judges as seen from the judges' chambers. SCF is producing two additional episodes of Stellar Decisis, which explore the themes of "Crime on the Moon" and "State Sovereignty on Mars". Through these episodes, SCF explores all forms of dispute settlement as they relate to current and future space activities. The goal of Stellar Decisis is to explore through social media the future of dispute settlement and fact patterns that relate and straddle the line of known law, regulations, and norms providing insight about our current system of space laws and its enforcement.