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NORWEGIAN SPACE LEGISLATION: WORK IN PROGRESS

Abstract

This paper will present the ongoing work on the reform of the Norwegian space legislation. The Norwegian space act currently in force (1969) is one of the oldest pieces of space legislation in the world. This act contains only three articles, and is no longer adequate for the needs of today's space sector. The Norwegian space sector has grown and evolved considerably over recent decades. Norway is increasingly important as a user and supplier of space-based services but is also dependent on international and European cooperation in space. A significant development is launch of small satellites into orbit from Andøya Space Centre. This expansion of Norwegian space activities has significant implications for Norway's responsibility and liability under international law. Norwegian space law reform aims at addressing this development as well as taking account of the dynamic, international and increasingly commercialized nature of space activities and the global environmental impact of spaceflight. The new space act will regulate a broader range of space activities, space debris and safety and security. Thus, one of the central aspects will be the conditions and requirements for granting the permit and what should be required in terms of sustainability and space debris minimization and avoidance. It is necessary to consider objectives, which may sometimes conflict with each other: the law being industry-friendly and encouraging commercial space activities with a strong international dimension, while ensuring the adequate level of safety, sustainability (including prevention of space debris) and setting sufficiently stringent conditions. This presentation will discuss these aspects and will seek to place the work on Norwegian (national) space legislation in the context of European space law and policy developments.