

# Bird & Bird Satellite Bulletin

June 2017



## *The Queen's Speech - Securing Spaceflight in the UK*

*"My government will work to attract investment in infrastructure to support economic growth. Legislation will be introduced to ensure the United Kingdom remains a world leader in new industries, including electric cars and commercial satellites".*

The space industry welcomed this announcement in the Queen's Speech on 21 June 2017. The aim is to place the UK in a market-leading position to compete in the rapidly growing global space market. It is even more important for the UK to distinguish itself in the run up to Brexit.

The Foreword to the UK Space Industry Bill (previously the Draft Spaceflight Bill) comments that:

*"As we prepare to leave the European Union and so refine our place in the world, we must ensure that the decisions we take now put the UK in a position to build a strong, resilient, well balanced economy that works for everyone."*

The UK Government are committed to getting the regulatory framework right to take advantage of the multi-billion pound opportunity presented by the growing space market and recognise the urgency with which legislation like the Space Industry Bill is required.

The UK seeks to be the first country in Europe to provide a hub for the low cost launch of small satellites, "We want to see UK spaceports enabling the launch of small satellites from the UK, as well as sub-orbital spaceflights and scientific experiments" the Foreword continues.

The UK is a world leader in the development and manufacture of small satellites. The Government

seeks to encourage this by ensuring a UK sovereign launch capability; thus providing end to end capability for small satellites. This is aligned with the Government's ambitious efforts to grow the UK's share of the global space market to 10% by 2030.

Low cost access to space will be a game-changing technology which will open up the market and commercial opportunities for smallsats. The UK Government intend that licences for launch and sub-orbital activities will be granted by 2020 and offer grant funding of around £10 million to kick-start activities.

Through the Bill the UK needs to balance long term risks and liabilities with encouraging innovation, commercialisation and sector growth, and keeping those involved as safe as possible.

To do so, it will use tools such as: risk assessments; third party liability and launch insurance requirements; unlimited indemnities to the Government; and liability caps for operators. Such requirements need to be transparent, proportionate and reasonable. It is vital that the UK Government works with industry to draft the implementing regulations under the Bill detailing how such tools will be used effectively.

If you have any queries or would like to receive further information please contact:

**Joanne Wheeler**

Partner, UK

Tel: +44 20 3017 6847

[joanne.wheeler@twobirds.com](mailto:joanne.wheeler@twobirds.com)

## Bird & Bird's Satellite Group

Bird & Bird's satellite group are international specialists with a unique reputation and track record in the industry. Through many years of experience working in-house, at regulators, in international institutions (EC, ESA, ITU, UN) and in private practice, we have built an extensive footprint of expertise and knowledge. Possessing a genuine interest in the sector, our team assist clients in many areas including: regulatory advice, industry specific commercial contacts, competition, corporate, finance, dispute resolution, employment, and insurance.

Our international team offers clients a one-stop shop to address the issues they face, with expert lawyers across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and strong experience in Africa.

Our satellite group fits neatly within Bird & Bird's world leading Tech & Comms sector group, which offers advice in related sectors such as: energy and utilities, life sciences, transport and maritime, aerospace, defence and security, aviation, financial services, and healthcare. Bird & Bird also house a team focused on SMEs and the needs of start-ups.

## Get in touch



**Joanne Wheeler**  
Partner, UK

Tel: +44 20 3017 6847  
[joanne.wheeler@twobirds.com](mailto:joanne.wheeler@twobirds.com)



**Graeme Maguire**  
Partner, Global Head of Tech & Comms, UK

Tel: +44 20 7905 6218  
[graeme.maguire@twobirds.com](mailto:graeme.maguire@twobirds.com)



**Hamish Fraser**  
Partner, Australia

Tel: +61 2 92269815  
[hamish.fraser@twobirds.com](mailto:hamish.fraser@twobirds.com)



**Marjolein Geus**  
Partner, The Netherlands

Tel: +31 70 353 8806  
[marjolein.geus@twobirds.com](mailto:marjolein.geus@twobirds.com)



**Piotr Dynowski**  
Partner, Poland

Tel: +48 22 459 79 14  
[piotr.dynowski@twobirds.com](mailto:piotr.dynowski@twobirds.com)



**Frédérique Dupuis-Toubol**  
Partner, France

Tel: +33 1 42 68 6023  
[frederique.dupuis.toubol@twobirds.com](mailto:frederique.dupuis.toubol@twobirds.com)



**Michelle Chan**  
Partner, China and Hong Kong

Tel: +852 2248 6111  
[michelle.chan@twobirds.com](mailto:michelle.chan@twobirds.com)



**Michel Matas**  
Partner, France

Tel: +33 1 42 68 6360  
[michel.matas@twobirds.com](mailto:michel.matas@twobirds.com)



**Sven-Erik Heun**  
Partner, Germany

Tel: +49 69 74222 6158  
[sven-erik.heun@twobirds.com](mailto:sven-erik.heun@twobirds.com)



**Jenni Tapio**  
Senior Associate, Finland

Tel: +358 96 226 788  
[jenni.tapio@twobirds.com](mailto:jenni.tapio@twobirds.com)



[twobirds.com](http://twobirds.com)

@TwoBirdsTech

Aarhus & Beijing & Bratislava & Brussels & Budapest & Copenhagen & Dubai & Dusseldorf & Frankfurt & The Hague & Hamburg & Helsinki & Hong Kong & London & Luxembourg & Lyon & Madrid & Milan & Munich & Paris & Prague & Rome & Shanghai & Singapore & Stockholm & Sydney & Warsaw

Bird & Bird is an international legal practice comprising Bird & Bird LLP and its affiliated and associated businesses. Bird & Bird LLP is a limited liability partnership, registered in England and Wales with registered number OC340318 and is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. Its registered office and principal place of business is at 12 New Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1JP. A list of members of Bird & Bird LLP and of any non-members who are designated as partners, and of their respective professional qualifications, is open to inspection at that address.