

# News story: Britain and Australia enter into space agreement

The Memorandum of Understanding, signed at the International Astronautical Congress in Bremen, Germany, provides a framework for collaborative activities and the exchange of information, technology and personnel between both nations.

Sam Gyimah, UK Science Minister said:

When Brits first heard about Australia we thought it was the final frontier, but now we can boldly go even further together through this special space partnership benefitting science, jobs and growth the world over.

This agreement is a great example of the importance of international collaboration and how, through our modern Industrial Strategy, we are working with our growing space sector to ensure it continues to thrive.

Computer generated image of NovaSAR. Credit: SSTL.

Hon Karen Andrews MP, Australian Minister for Industry, Science and Technology said:

Forging international partnerships is vital to building Australia's space industry and ensuring our businesses can compete on the world stage,

These agreements with counterpart space agencies in Canada and the United Kingdom will increase opportunities to work together and share information, technology and personnel between our nations.

They represent a significant step in Australia's journey with fellow spacefaring nations, and will help to grow the capability and competitiveness of our domestic space sector.

The agreement was signed between the UK Space Agency and the Australian Space Agency, which was established on 1 July 2018. With 10,000 people already working in its space sector, Australia has strong capabilities in areas such as satellite data applications and the tracking of space debris, as well as an established network of ground stations to support communications and other space technologies.

Dr Megan Clark AC, Head of the Australian Space Agency, said:

UK and Australia are both committed to growing their space industries and we welcome new cooperation between UK and Australia in space including CSIRO's partnership with Surrey Satellite on the NovaSar earth observation satellite and Airbus and UK Ministry of Defence on the Zephyr.

The UK and Australia have a deep history and friendship that includes long-term partnership in space science. During the Space Race from the 1950s, the first British Skylark and Black Arrow rockets were launched from Woomera in Southern Australia.

This MoU builds on cooperation in space between the two countries in the areas of space science, technology and applications, space policy, law and regulation and human capital development.

Joint work continues to this day with the launch last week of the Surrey Satellite NovaSAR, which uses radar to view the Earth through cloud cover. The satellite will share 10% of its data with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in Australia.

The International Astronautical Congress is an annual meeting of global space agencies and industry which is organised by the International Astronautical Federation, of which the UK Space Agency is a voting member. The UK Space Agency CEO Graham Turnock will address the conference (3 October) about the UK's plans to thrive in the commercial space age over the next decade by developing national launch capabilities and supporting the growth of satellite applications, while continuing to play a leading role as a founding member of the European Space Agency.