



19 March 2024

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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO BOX 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary,

RE: Technology Safeguards Agreement (TSA)

Canberra Airport thanks the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties for the opportunity to submit a response in relation to the *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America on Technology Safeguards Associated with United States Participation in Space Launches from Australia (the Agreement)*.

The *Agreement* presents a unique opportunity for Australia to grow its sovereign capability and launch experience in the domestic space sector through partnering with a more mature spacefaring nation - the United States. The *Agreement* will foreseeably positively promote advancements in Australia's own space capabilities in addition to providing benefit to other associated industries including advanced manufacturing and logistics.

The aviation sector has much to offer in relation to safeguarding United States space technologies under the obligations of the *Agreement* and importantly, aviation industry participants are also likely to benefit from the activities the *Agreement* generates. These positions are further detailed within the attached submission.

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Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

Tori Murray
Senior Aviation and Space Manager



Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties regarding the
*Agreement between the Government of Australia and the
Government of the United States of America on Technology
Safeguards Associated with United States Participation in
Space Launches from Australia*

March 2024



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Introduction

Canberra Airport welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties on the *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America on Technology Safeguards Associated with the United States Participation in Space Launches from Australia (Agreement)*.

Canberra Airport understands that the *Agreement* will provide United States' businesses and organisations with access to Australian territory to undertake commercial space launches using United States space systems. Further, it is recognised that the *Agreement* has been developed to protect the interests of United States' space systems being launched from Australia whilst providing opportunities for domestic space industry to become involved in these launches through regulated participation. The opportunities that can be gleaned from the *Agreement* by Australian owned and operated business involved in both the upstream and downstream industries of the Australian space eco-system are promising.

Further and of importance to note, as operators of international gateways, Australian airports will be critical participants in the logistics supply chain to ensure the safe handling and secure transportation of United States space systems entering into Australia.

Developing Australia's Space Industry

The development of an Australian space industry will be vital to the aspirations of developing and delivering sovereign technological capability. Partnering with mature spacefaring nations such the United States offers a unique and important opportunity to enhance Australia's position in the global space eco-system.

Australia like other modern societies is now reliant on space operations and technologies to enable its major activities and support its key economic interests. Australia depends on space technology to provide essential everyday services to its citizens and enhance its activities including but not limited to communications, banking, agriculture, navigation, weather, and the security of its borders. For the aviation sector, it is inevitable that in time, air traffic management will move to space-based satellite communication systems rather than using traditional terrestrial technologies due to the benefits of greater coverage, improved reliability and better operational efficiencies.



The economy's reliance on space industry participants to deliver these space-enabled technologies to advance Australian society is telling. For the Australian space industry to continue to develop, there must be adequate, affordable, and secure access to space. The provision of Australian launch services is necessary for delivering true sovereign space capability. The *Agreement* will significantly promote the development and delivery of launch capabilities and services within Australia by leveraging increased demands for access to space by other nations including the United States.

Canberra's Space Eco-System

Canberra Airport is proud to be an integral part of the Canberra region space eco-system. Canberra Airport is home to more than 15,000 workers with a strong contingent of these employed by industry leading organisations specialising in aerospace technologies and operations with connections to space related activities.

It is anticipated that the *Agreement* will offer improved opportunities for Canberra-based businesses to deepen connections with United States companies undertaking space activities in Australia. Across the nation, this will likely inject further investment and interest into the domestic space sector and increase opportunities for its participants. Importantly, the *Agreement* may potentially offer opportunities for Australian developed and manufactured spacecraft, including those developed in Canberra, to be tested and launched in a domestic setting. The realisation of this opportunity will contribute to better local economic output and assist in mitigating the physical and security risks associated with highly sensitive technical systems being transported to foreign launch locations. Further, the *Agreement* may also contribute to spacecraft having been developed or manufactured in Canberra being included in United States missions that are launched from Australia.

The Benefits of Airports

Should the *Agreement* be implemented and commercial space launches using United States space systems be conducted within Australia, airports will play an important role as the gateway for the imports of highly sensitive and secure freight. Given the connectivity of the Australian aviation network, imported spacecraft components and systems can be easily onforwarded to destination points including those in rural and remote areas hosting launch activities.



The infrastructure at Australian airports to support sensitive freight operations is significant. Airports including Canberra Airport have undertaken considerable investment into the development of modern aerodromes that support passenger and freight services. In particular, these developments would be of benefit to the United States and Australian space industry participants who under the *Agreement* may require secure and discreet logistics infrastructure. Airports have invested heavily in security apparatus, hangars, cargo handling facilities, aircraft parking bays and aprons that can be assigned to handle sensitive freight movements.

In particular, the facilities at Canberra Airport are complimented by the presence on airport of the Royal Australian Airforce No. 34 Squadron who are responsible for the arrival and departure of domestic and international VIP movements. The secure facilities at Canberra Airport provide the backdrop for the necessary support to visiting heads of state, defence officials and Australian parliamentarians. The infrastructure assets of this same secure ecosystem could be deployed to assist in the application of import activities under the *Agreement*.

Due to their highly secured ecosystems, airports also offer advanced aerospace manufacturing and testing opportunities where sovereign satellites, rocket bodies and other space system components can be locally designed, manufactured and tested ready for launch in the Australian space market. Airport based advanced manufacturing and testing facilities can also subsequently reduce the overhandling of sensitive freight through direct airport to airport transfers reducing the chances of vibrational damage often caused by road transportation.

Conclusion

The ongoing development of our domestic space industry is critical to ensuring Australia has sovereign capability in its activities and affairs that rely on space operations; including space activities that enhance and protect airspace navigation and communications. The ability to access space from Australia will convey a strong message of the strength of our domestic space sector and provide added capability to other closely aligned industries including traditional aviation and advanced aerospace manufacturing.

Ensuring security of United States space systems imported into Australia is paramount to the success of local launches conducted under the *Agreement*. Airports provide a high security environment that is conducive to sensitive freight handling. Airports also offer expedited freight receiving and forwarding services and provide secure chains of custody.



Existing restricted and secure areas, such as those at Canberra Airport, are demonstrative of the operational environment that can provide the security ecosystem needed to deliver the obligations under the *Agreement*.

The *Agreement* presents a unique and important opportunity for the Australian space sector. The *Agreement* could provide the nation with further space launch experience, improved space capability, an enhanced space economy, and presents as an opportunity for Australian airports to be part of these activities.

Given the potential positive impacts that the *Agreement* presents to the Australian space sector, other associated industries such as aviation and the greater economy, Canberra Airport supports in principle the intent of the *Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America on Technology Safeguards Associated with the United States Participation in Space Launches from Australia*.

Canberra Airport – March 2024