

Paris, 14 March 2017
PR042 – 2017

French Space Operations Act Very positive results for CNES

Six years after the French Space Operations Act (FSOA) came into effect, CNES brought together space stakeholders today to analyse its impacts in light of the latest evolutions in orbital systems and launchers. Drafted on the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research, the FSOA was adopted on 3 June 2008. Today's review found that actions since undertaken by CNES have achieved very good results.

The world of space is changing fast and CNES intends to keep driving innovation through cutting-edge technologies and concepts. But the pace of change must never detract from the safety of space operations. In this respect, the FSOA provides the guarantee of regulatory compliance in a domain where fierce competition is forever pushing the limits of what is possible. The act translates the international commitments that France has made under UN treaties and the requirements space operators must fulfil with regard to the safety of people, property and the environment, and to public health. CNES is tasked with ensuring that launch authorization and orbital control processes are followed and tools tailored to requirements.

Space manufacturers, research laboratories and educators alike are working with CNES to adapt and anticipate so that France is able to leverage its expertise to maximum effect within the framework of the FSOA. As a result of the act, much more input has been forthcoming from all stakeholders, thus promoting closer mutual understanding and better agility, while paving the way for continued progress and perfect prowess in operational execution.

Tasked with drafting technical regulations and checking regulatory compliance, CNES has achieved extremely good results since the FSOA came into effect in 2010: authorizations have been delivered on time, regulations have been scrupulously applied and no accident has occurred on the ground, in flight or in orbit. This feedback covers all technical and executive aspects for more than 100 space operations with launch systems and orbital systems. CNES has also drafted a new regulation concerning the obligation to ensure re-entry of launcher stages after each launch.

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