



UK Space Agency Strategy 2011 – 2015

Scottish Chambers of Commerce are delighted to have the opportunity to comment on the UK Space Agency Strategy. We are particularly pleased and encouraged by the draft Strategy's focus on harnessing the economic benefits of Space related activity.

Strategy implementation

We are keen to emphasise the role that Scotland, and Scottish business, has to play in the implementation of this Strategy and the realisation of its economic goals. Scottish involvement in implementation of the Strategy will support the twin stated aims of delivering value for money and maximising the economic benefits of Space activities.

To fully exploit the economic potential of space-related activity, the UK Space Agency must operate on a truly UK wide basis, ensuring that the expertise and natural resources of the north of Scotland are as integrated into the Strategy implementation programme as any activity in the metropolitan south-east of England.

Moray

The Moray area, in particular, has been active in recent years in preparing to exploit the opportunities that Space technology will engender in the near future.

As well as its clear skies and open spaces, Moray has the physical infrastructure and skills base to support significant Space related economic activity, thanks to the Royal Air Force's longstanding presence in the area. The high level of defence activity in Moray means the area is already using Space related technology in one of its key industries.

Moray's viability as a centre for space related activity in the UK is backed by a network of local businesses and national researchers in the form of the 'Science, Space and Stars' forum.

The Moray Chamber of Commerce is a key driver of this activity, recently bringing Professor George Fraser, Director of the influential and respected Space Research Centre at Leicester University, to speak to stakeholders. Professor Fraser told delegates at a conference in Elgin in March 2011 that Moray would be the ideal location for a spaceport, for example, and that the region had great potential as a centre for excellence in Space tourism and exploration.

Engagement with business

In order to achieve the Strategy's stated aim of maximising the economic potential of Space related activity in the UK, implementation must be taken forward in partnership with the stakeholders who will drive the economic exploitation of space technology.

The economic potential of space related activity will be most fully realised by businesses working with the support of Government, rather than by a Government-led programme of activity.

I hope that these comments are helpful in moving forward with the UK Space Agency Strategy. Please do get in touch if we can be of any further assistance at all.

Amy Rodger
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