

Hon Martin Hamilton-Smith MP

Minister for Defence Industries

Thursday 13 July 2017

SA prepared to go it alone on space

The South Australian Government will push ahead with plans for a local industry node of a future Australian Space Agency after yet more inaction by the Federal Government.

Minister for Defence Industries Martin Hamilton-Smith said today's announcement that a review of the nation's space capabilities would be commissioned to report in March next year, suggests nothing will happen until after the 2018 Budget..

He said if the Commonwealth fails to act South Australia will look to launch its own structure and organisation before Adelaide hosts the 68th International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in September.

Australia is only one of two OECD nations without its own space agency, something the local space sector says means we are missing out on our share of the fast growing \$420 billion global industry.

Background

South Australia is working to establish itself as a hub for space industry research and development. At least 60 local organisations with space-related expertise, or the potential to apply current expertise to the space value chain, have been identified in the state.

In March the Space Industry Association of Australia released its White Paper, 'Advancing Australia in Space' to the Federal Minister for Industry Innovation and Science, calling for the Australian Government to commit to a permanent national space program and establish an Australian Space Agency.

In April Cabinet considered the White Paper and agreed to advocate for the establishment of an Australian Space Agency based in Canberra, with South Australia as its operational centre.

From 25-29 September 2017, Adelaide will host the 68th IAC, set to attract around 4000 international and local delegates, including the world's leading space agencies, making it one of the largest conferences ever held in the city and set to inject around \$20 million into the local economy.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Defence Industries Martin Hamilton-Smith

The Commonwealth Government is moving too slowly to establish a national space agency. The Coalition is moving at a snail's pace. At this rate we'll get to the moon one million years from now .

Australia risks looking out of touch and behind the times in late September when Adelaide hosts the IAC to be attended by around 4000 of the world's leading space sector operators including researchers, astronauts, scientists, space agencies and commercial enterprises.

This could have been a platform for the Prime Minister to demonstrate Australia's embrace of cutting edge technologies on a world stage. Instead of being agile, we risk looking puerile.

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In January this year the Premier Jay Weatherill wrote to the Prime Minister urging the establishment of a space agency, a message which will be taken again today to the COAG Industry and Skills Council.

We support the Space Industry Association's March White Paper Advancing Australia in Space and we have already produced our own *Space Innovation and Growth Strategy (South Australia)*

http://www.defencesa.com/upload/capabilities/space/Space%20Strategic%20Plan%20-%20booklet%20format%208%20September%202016_FINAL.pdf and the South Australian Space Capabilities Directory <http://www.defencesa.com/upload/Space%20Capability%20Directory.pdf>

The SA Government will use the Adelaide IAC to showcase Australian Space industry and technology to the world and will work with other states and territories to promote Australia as an international partner in space industry activity, given the absence of leadership from Canberra.

This is a \$330 billion global space industry and the Australian space sector currently produces annual revenues of \$3 - \$4 billion and employs up to 11,500 people. It's not good enough for Canberra to have the naval gaze while the eyes of the world are looking at Australia for leadership when we host the IAC in SA in the coming months.