

Cross-Party Group on Space

Wednesday 18 September 2024, 12:15 – 13:45

Minutes

Present

MSPs

Colin Beattie MSP
Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP
Carol Mochan MSP
Paul Sweeney MSP
Beatrice Wishart MSP

Invited guests

Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Business
Paul Cremin, Department for Transport
Joe Peace, ADS Group
Rory McGregor, Scottish Government
Lynn Dow, Scottish Government

Non-MSP Group Members

Derek Harris, Skyrora
Grant Lewis, Lockheed Martin UK
Nic Ross, Niparo
Derek Young, Institute of Physics
Sandra Craig, Spirit Aerosystems
Hannah Miller, Scottish Parliament
Malachy Devlin, Celestia UK
Daniel Smith, AstroAgency
Julian Dines, UK Astronomy Technology Centre
Kelly Hardman, Fragomen LLP
Andy Nolan, Brodies LLP
Sharon Lemaac-Vincere, Strathclyde University
Jacqueline Woo, Dionach
Angela Matis, ThinkTank Maths
David Shaw, Civil Aviation Authority
Jonathon Orr, University of Strathclyde
Jonas Bjarnoe, Orbex
Luke Vanstone, Benchmark Space Systems
Karen Wilson, Scottish Enterprise
Athina Frantzana, University of Edinburgh

Peter Anderson, AAC Clyde Space
Alan Thompson, Skyrora
Ed Fyfe, Ed Fyfe Design
Keith Robson, Open University
Alison McLure, Institute of Physics
Massimiliano Vasile, University of Strathclyde
Yvette Hopkins, Craft Prospect
Andrew Fournet, CGI
Scott Steele, Scottish Parliament
Warrick Malcolm, ADS Group
Ken Doig, ADS Group
Victoria Mills, ADS Group

Apologies

Sharon Downie MSP
Jenny Gray, Scottish Parliament

Agenda item 1- Opening Remarks

Minutes approved from the previous meeting.
Proposed by Derek Young; seconded by Derek Harris.

The following new members were welcomed to the group:

- Athina Frantzana, University of Edinburgh
- Dr Christie Maddock, University of Strathclyde
- Dr Massimiliano Vasile, University of Strathclyde
- Jaqueline Woo, Dionach
- Jenni Doonan, Fife College
- Theresa Condor, Spire
- Ed Fyfe, Ed Fyfe Design
- Kelly Hardman, Fragomen
- Brian Gallacher, Plexus

Agenda item 2 – Guest speaker: Minister for Business, Richard Lochhead MSP

Space Comm Expo took place in Glasgow on 11 – 12 September 2024. The Minister attended, speaking with companies, investors, the UN, and the UK Space Agency, emphasising the sector's potential for attracting inward investment.

The Minister spoke of the creation of high-value, well-paid jobs in the space sector, contributing to Scotland's revenue and tax base, as well as the sector's export orientation, and Scotland's unique end-to-end capabilities. The opportunities are there to integrate space with other sectors like fintech, climate monitoring, photonics, and quantum computing. The Scottish Government has a role in supporting the sector through enterprise companies, the Scottish National Investment Bank, as well as acting as a customer for space-related services.

The Minister noted of the appointment of Scotland's first sector-specific Trade and Investment Envoy, Daniel Smith, Founder and Creative Director of AstroAgency.

Following the James Withers review, the skills system is being simplified to be more navigable and aligned with industry needs, the goal being to bring industry and business closer to the skills system. Further details will be provided in the coming weeks and months.

The challenge in Scotland of scaling up from SMEs to medium sized companies was mentioned with the Minister acknowledging that this issue was common across many high-growth sectors in Scotland. The Minister assured that various activities were underway to support scaling up.

Further to the challenges around skills, and financing, the lack of space for growth was raised, with a shortage of intermediary spaces. The Minister agreed that this was a familiar topic, with efforts being made to tackle it. He invited anyone with further information or specific concerns to email him for consideration.

The Minister emphasised the need to expand ambitions to include wider expenditures in space exploration, defence, and security. The speaker aimed for Scotland to capture a share of these opportunities and planned to discuss these issues with the UK Government and the UK Space Agency. They stressed the importance of ensuring that Scottish companies, and those across the UK, received a fair share of significant contracts, particularly in defence.

The Minister is planning a round table with the space industry to address current issues, in the coming weeks.

Agenda item 3 - Guest speaker: Paul Cremin, Head of Commercial Spaceflight, Aviation Directorate, Department for Transport

Title: Demystifying the Process integrating launch through UK & International Airspace

The process of launching to space involves navigating complex airspace and integration challenges. The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) oversees the licensing process, including a detailed flight safety analysis to assess risks and ensure safe trajectories. This involves negotiating with neighbouring countries for airspace and maritime agreements, which can take 9-12 months. The Department for Transport plays a crucial role in ensuring compliance and national interest. The goal is to streamline processes and improve real-time management of airspace and debris response areas.

Concerns were raised about the feasibility of achieving blanket assurance coverage for launches and the potential impact of a launch-by-launch approach on future launch

manifests. It was emphasised that transparent and detailed launch schedules from operators are necessary to avoid delays, with achieving a regional solution for blanket assurance coverage expected to take about two to three years due to varying readiness levels among countries. Additionally, improving the quality of information provided by operators and having honest discussions about technical readiness were highlighted as crucial steps.

It has been suggested to both the Faroe Islands and Iceland to collaborate with UK space ports, seeking ways to support the UK space program and get involved in the space sector. Building radar coverage and tracking solutions that encompass that whole region would provide greater assurance for both maritime and aviation sectors.

Agenda item 4 - Guest Speaker: Joe Peace, Head of Event Sales, ADS Group

Title: 'UKROC 2025 sponsorship opportunities'

The UK Youth Rocketry Challenge, running since 2005, is organised by ADS with help from retired engineers known as 'Rocketeers'. Students aged 11-18 from secondary schools, colleges, educational facilities, and youth groups are invited to design, build, and launch a model rocket. The goal is to safely return a raw egg payload to Earth while meeting specific flight parameters.

Key Dates:

- Scottish Regional: 18 March 2025
- National Finals: April 2025
- International Final: Paris Airshow, June 2025, competing against teams from the USA, Japan, and France

The top team from the Scottish Regional will advance to the Nationals, with the National winner earning a spot at the International final. All expenses are covered by sponsors.

If you're interested in incorporating UKROC sponsorship into your STEM outreach programme, please get in touch with Joe Peace (joe.peace@adsgroup.org.uk).

Agenda item 5 – Discussion of Work Programme and actions arising

Some members of the CPG are meeting with educators to establish a proper progression for students in careers in space. More details will follow in due course.

- 1. Graeme Dey, the Scottish Government Minister for Higher and Further Education, will be invited to the next meeting to discuss skills and education.**

- Carried forward
- 2. **Frank Strang and Ramsay Jones to update on event planning at the next meeting.**
 - Carried forward
- 3. **Industry Connections for Colin Beattie MSP: Joanne Wheeler will share contacts related to the UK CanSat competition, the National Space Academy, and the Prospero Fellowship.**
 - Carried forward
- 4. **Invite Daniel Smith, Trade & Investment Envoy for Space to present a future CPG for Space meeting.**
- 5. **Letter from Minister Arthur (in lieu of Minister Lochhead) dated 12 June 2024 will be shared with the group; we can then form a work programme of different areas that we can follow up with the Scottish Government.**

Agenda item 5 – AOB

Hub Events have announced a date for the next SpaceComm Expo Scotland event: Scottish Event Campus in Glasgow, 04 - 05 December 2025.

Query raised for all to think about - as a cohort, how are we supporting Scotland's first launch? What activities do we have planned to maximise this opportunity?

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 03 December, 10:30-12:00, online.