



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 260818-0007; XRIN 0648-XA009]

Notice of Mission Authorization Pilot Program

AGENCY: Office of Space Commerce (OSC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; request for expressions of interest in participating in mission authorization proposal pilot process.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 5 of Executive Order 14335, "Enabling Competition in the Commercial Space Industry," the Office of Space Commerce (OSC) seeks to implement a streamlined, unified, whole-of-government mission authorization framework for novel in-space activities. To refine this proposed Space Commerce Certification (SCC) framework, OSC is inviting expressions of interest from U.S. entities in participating in a pilot phase.

DATES: Space operators interested in participating in the SCC framework pilot program must submit expressions of interest no later than **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]**.

ADDRESSES:

Operators may express interest in participating in the SCC framework pilot program by sending an email to *Space.Certification@noaa.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For general inquiries, contact Gabriel Swiney, Director, Policy, Advocacy, and International Division, Office of Space Commerce, NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce, at *gabriel.swiney@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Pursuant to Section 5 of Executive Order 14335, "Enabling Competition in the Commercial Space Industry," (E.O. 14335) and following the March 2026 release of our Proposal for Space Commerce Certification Process, the Office of Space Commerce (OSC) seeks to implement a streamlined individualized mission authorization framework for novel in-space activities. As stated in E.O. 14335, this mission authorization is intended for in-space activities that are not currently clearly or straightforwardly governed by existing regulatory frameworks.

To refine this proposed Space Commerce Certification (SCC) framework, OSC is inviting expressions of interest in participating in a pilot phase. Any United States entity interested in participating and potentially having their missions selected to test the SCC framework process are invited to submit summaries of planned missions. OSC will

review submissions and notify those who are selected to participate as part of the pilot phase.

In coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Department of War, Department of State, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other relevant agencies as needed, OSC will use this pilot phase to test and further develop its SCC proposal in a transparent manner and with expected engagement opportunities for industry stakeholders and the public. Specifically, selected participants will be requested to complete an SCC application. OSC, with other relevant agencies noted above, intends to review this application to identify areas of interagency concern. Together with the participant, OSC would seek adjustments and practices to address those areas of interagency concern. Once complete, OSC intends to issue an SCC. An SCC may include OSC's recommended best practices for the proposed mission.

Participants will have the opportunity to provide the agencies with feedback on the process. This input is expected to inform future regulatory approaches to expedite and streamline authorizations for novel in-space activities, in support of the goal of Section 5 of the Executive Order.

OSC will be highly selective during this initial pilot phase. Submission of an expression of interest does not

guarantee selection for the pilot phase evaluation cohort. OSC will prioritize missions that are critical to industry advancement, are sufficiently likely to occur, and represent high-utility use cases. Additionally, OSC anticipates that the pilot phase will require active involvement from participants.

This mission authorization pilot process will be voluntary and non-binding on all participants. Grant of an SCC during this pilot phase, on its own, will have no direct legal effect. OSC maintains discretion in all aspects of whether to grant an SCC, and FAA and FCC maintain discretion in determining whether and in what way, if any, to consider an SCC in their regulatory process. Therefore, participants are still required to independently satisfy all existing regulatory requirements for licensing by the FCC and FAA.

However, OSC's ultimate goal is for the SCC process to speed up and simplify the authorization process for novel in-space activities. For example, information submitted through the SCC process could potentially be used as a basis for satisfaction or waiver of FCC rules regarding matters such as strategies for mitigating orbital debris. Likewise, the SCC process could serve as an alternative for certain portions of the FAA's payload reviews. OSC anticipates that this pilot phase may enable the FAA and FCC to determine, with more specificity, how they intend to

use or incorporate the SCC process in their existing regulatory frameworks as a tool for streamlining.

Submission Instructions:

Participation in this Call for Interest is entirely voluntary. Proprietary commercial information should be clearly marked as such, and OSC will handle all business-sensitive data in accordance with applicable federal confidentiality laws. Interested operators should submit a summary of their planned mission to

Space.Certification@noaa.gov with the subject line:

"Interest - Space Commerce Certification Proposal."

Submissions must include the following information:

- (1) The nominated entities full name, any affiliations, and contact information including name, email address, mailing address, and phone number;
- (2) Evidence of U.S. entity ownership/operation, or in the case of an individual nominee, U.S. citizenship;
- (3) Mission Concept & Timeline: A clear description of the intended operations, the space object(s) involved, and the targeted launch/deployment timeline;
- (4) OSC Collaboration & Best Practices: A statement confirming the submitter's commitment to working with OSC, in a manner as transparent to the public as possible, to develop best practices consistent

with U.S. Government interests applicable to their intended operations.

Paperwork Reduction Act Burden Statement:

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0690-0038. Without this approval, we could not conduct this information collection. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the NOAA PRA Office at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov.

Privacy Act Statement:

Authority. The collection of this information is authorized under 5 U.S.C. 301, Departmental regulations which authorizes the operations of an executive agency, including the creation, custodianship, maintenance and distribution of records, and 15 U.S.C. 1512, Powers and duties of Department.

Purpose. The collection of names and contact information is required in order for NOAA to evaluate expressions of interest.

Routine Uses. NOAA will use the submitted information for the purpose set forth above. The Privacy Act of 1974 authorizes disclosure of the information collected to NOAA staff for work-related purposes and for other purposes only as set forth in the Privacy Act and for routine uses published in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/DEPT-11, Candidates for Membership, Members, and Former Members of Department of Commerce Advisory Committees, available at <https://www.commerce.gov/opog/privacy/SORN/SORN-DEPT-11> and the System of Records Notice COMMERCE/DEPT-18, Employees Personnel Files Not Covered by Notices of Other Agencies, available at <https://www.commerce.gov/opog/privacy/SORN/SORN-DEPT-18>.

The Director of the Office of Space Commerce, Assistant Secretary of Commerce Taylor Jordan, having reviewed and approved this document, authorizes Cody Knipfer, who is the Federal Register Liaison, to electronically sign this document for purposes of publication in the Federal Register.

Authority: 51 U.S.C. 50702.

Dated: August 18, 2026.

Cody Knipfer,

Federal Register Liaison, Office of Space Commerce.

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