

Framework for space surveillance and tracking (SST) support

2013/0064(COD) - 28/02/2013 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a space surveillance and tracking support programme for the period 2014 to 2020.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: space-based applications and derived services as well as space research have become critical for the implementation of EU policies, such as environment, climate change, maritime policies, development, agriculture, security related policies.

In Europe there are today **limited capacities to monitor and survey satellites and space debris** as well as re-entry of space objects into the Earth's atmosphere. Furthermore, there are no proper services to issue collision warnings for satellite operators.

A space surveillance and tracking ('SST') **support programme** should therefore be established with the aim to support the setting up and operation of services consisting of monitoring and surveying space objects with a view to preventing damage to spacecraft resulting from collisions.

In its Communication entitled "[Towards a space strategy for the European Union that benefits its citizens](#)", the Commission underlined that the shared competence in the field of space conferred upon the Union by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) goes hand in hand with a reinforced partnership with the Member States. The need for EU action in the domain has been supported by Member States in **several Council Resolutions and Conclusions**. In its [resolution](#) on a space strategy for the European Union adopted on 19 January 2012, the European Parliament shares this point of view.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the proposal follows an extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public. It is accompanied by an [impact assessment](#).

During the consultation, Member States asked the EU to define the governance and data policy for a European SST service, to play an active role in the setting up of the service, and to make best use of existing sensors and expertise. The consultation also showed that the public opinion is aware of and supports the need to protect space infrastructure.

LEGAL BASIS: Article 189(2) of the TFEU.

CONTENT: the current proposal for a Decision concerns the **establishment of a European service which will seek to prevent collisions between spacecraft or between spacecraft and debris** and monitor uncontrolled re-entry of complete spacecraft or parts thereof. In technical terms this service is referred to as a European SST service.

The proposal defines the objectives of the proposed action, namely, the provision of **Space Surveillance and Tracking services**, the scope of the services to be provided, the governance aspects, as well as the budgetary resources. The proposed Decision allows for the definition of a **partnership**, whereby Member States will contribute with their existing and future assets to the SST capability at European level and the

Union will provide a legal framework and a financial contribution to the implementation of the actions defined. The legal framework defines the **governance scheme and the data policy**.

Lastly, the proposed European SST services accommodate an essential objective of the space industrial policy of the EU (identified in the Commission's Communication on *Elements for an EU Space Industrial Policy* to be released in 2013), namely to **achieve European technological non-dependence** in critical domains, and to maintain independent access to space.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: the SST programme remains within the overall EU budget envelope proposed by the Commission for the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

No funding requests beyond the MFF proposal are made.

The indicative Union overall contribution to the implementation of the support programme is **EUR 70 million** over the period from 2014-2020 at current prices. However, this overall contribution depends on the outcome of the ongoing co-decision process on the MFF.