Oman Unveils Commercial Space Framework and Launch Authorization Regime

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The Oman Civil Aviation Authority ("CAA") has formally published its directive on *Airspace Usage for Launch Vehicle Activities*. The directive provides the requirements for launch vehicle activities conducted within or from the territory of Oman.

Complementing the directive is a six-page application for operators to seeking to perform a space activity in Oman to submit to the Director General of the CAA. With the framework in place and applications ready, this is the optimal opportunity for investors seeking first movers' advantage in a novel jurisdiction with ostensibly clear space ambitions.

The Directive

The directive empowers the Civil Aviation Authority, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology ("MTCIT"), to manage and control the nation's airspace for launch vehicle operations and ensure the safety and efficiency of civil aviation.

Under the directive, any operator intending to conduct a launch from or within Omani territory must first coordinate with the MTCIT and then apply to the CAA's Director General of Civil Aviation Regulation. The application must be filed no later than 45 working days before the planned launch date. The directive requires the operator to be accompanied by a

“subject matter expert” who can brief the CAA on the intended activity.

The directive requires applicants to disclose detailed mission parameters, including launch windows, vehicle specifications, and deviation mechanisms. Each launch plan must be supported by a WGS-84 map of the launch site, safety buffers, and flight path coordinates. These data points are critical for the CAA’s issuance of a Notice to Air Missions (“NOTAM”), the mechanism through which the Authority reserves and manages portions of national airspace during launch operations, discussed further below.

Additionally, the subject matter expert must facilitate to the CAA a hazard identification plan followed by a risk assessment report evaluating severity, probability, and preventive measures. This is to ensure the fitness of the rocket and the safety of the airspace. The directive further mandates meteorological assessments, a “Go/No-Go” weather criterion, and coordination with the CAA for any required meteorological data or equipment.

Given Oman’s proximity to other launch-capable states such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, coordination with adjacent airspace authorities is expected as part of broader air traffic control considerations.

Application Form

At the outset, before the applicant submits their application to the Director General of the CAA’s Civil Aviation Regulation. The application form consists of the following thirteen sections:

1. Details of the applicant
2. The case manager at the MTCIT
3. Details of the launch site operator
4. The mission details
5. Mission summary

6. Key flight parameters and performance metrics
7. Vehicle specifications
8. Launch plan
9. Weather requirements
10. Hazard management
11. Details of state coordination
12. Any additional requirements the CAA may require
13. Declaration

To download the application form, click on the following link: Application of Airspace Operation for Space Activities Issue 2 Revision 00.pdf

Next Steps for Investors

With the framework now in force, this presents an opportunity for prudent operators to gain early operational access to a strategically located Gulf jurisdiction, and the opportunity to influence the development of Oman's broader space governance architecture.

Prospective operators should begin compiling the technical, operational, and safety documentation required under the directive for submission to the CAA.

In the interim, Oman will be preparing to open doors to its first-ever commercial spaceport, the Etlaq Spaceport, by 2027. Etlaq is a massive endeavor and will consist of a mission-control facility, warehouses to be used for rocket manufacturing and testing, and a business park to provide operators with a shared infrastructure. Operators who move swiftly may have their application and NOTAM ready just in time for launch from Etlaq.

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