



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Queen's Speech: Royal Aeronautical Society welcomes plans to unleash the potential of aerospace technology and industry expertise

The Queen's Speech today confirmed plans for a **Modern Transport Bill** as part of the Government's legislative programme for the year ahead. The Bill promises to 'put Britain at the forefront of the modern transport revolution', including the delivery of the UK's first spaceport and provide support to the fast-growing civilian unmanned drone sector.

Commenting on today's Queen Speech, specifically the Modern Transport Bill, Simon Whalley, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at the Royal Aeronautical Society, said:

On the future development of the UK's first commercial spaceport

"The UK space industry is already worth around £12 billion a year to the national economy; punching well above its weight in the international marketplace. The Government has ambitious plans for the UK space sector to grow its market share to 10% by 2030 – increasing the industry's worth to £40 billion by 2030 – and an important means of achieving this goal is the delivery of a commercially viable UK spaceport.

"A spaceport would be a highly valuable piece of infrastructure, acting not only as a centre for a £45 million a year space tourism market, but also for cutting-edge scientific research, development and innovation. Indeed, a sovereign satellite launch capability could help the UK to be a world leader in small satellite manufacture.

"Crucial though the much-talked-about final location of the spaceport site will be, a number of technical, business, legal and regulatory hurdles will need to be overcome as early as possible for the project to be deliverable and 'investable'. The proposed Modern Transport Bill is a welcome renewed commitment by Government to this vital project and a unique opportunity to capture the benefits of the UK's competitive advantage in satellite and space technology."

On bringing safe commercial and personal drone flight for households and businesses a step closer

"The market in civil drones is growing rapidly, driven largely by small, cost-effective and versatile systems with a variety of uses. Indeed, the rate of increase in new market entrants for small systems is a reflection of their accessibility and low costs. The challenge is to further enable this



early industrial base to a sustainable future where it may even become the first to be fully integrated into the world of manned aviation.

“The UK has made great progress in this area thanks, in part, to progress with its regulatory framework. The Government must use the proposed Modern Transport Bill to set out how regulation can enable widespread public acceptance of drone operations, how the existing base of small drone operations can be used to enable bigger steps towards drone integration in current airspace and how it will take early advantage of what is happening in the civil market to accelerate the expansion of the industrial base to deliver the substantial benefits available to the national economy.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. Royal Aeronautical Society spokespeople are available for interview or further comment.
2. The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) is the world’s only professional body dedicated to the entire aerospace community. The Society promotes the highest professional standards in all aerospace disciplines; provides specialist information; acts as a central forum for the exchange of ideas; and plays a leading role in influencing opinion on aerospace matters. Visit www.aerosociety.com for more information.
3. In February 2016, the Royal Aeronautical Society’s [Space Group](#) hosted a one-day conference on spaceports, which aimed to broaden the awareness of the opportunities and challenges associated with the establishment of a spaceport in the UK. The conference included presentations from each of the candidate site locations.
4. The Royal Aeronautical Society [Unmanned Aircraft Systems Group](#) is supporting the Government’s development of a civil drone strategy and only last month held a workshop exploring the potential role of registration and identification systems for the safe use of civil drones.

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