

Rocket firm all systems go following new legislation

Signalling the go-ahead for three vertical spaceports will unlock a huge economic boost for the UK and its plans to lead the global space race, the boss of a Scottish rocket launch company has claimed.

Volodymyr Levykin, CEO of [Skyrora](#), said the Government's announcement paves the way for commercial and environmental space launches from UK soil, as well as opening the door to a potential jobs boom in the space sector.

New regulations laid in Parliament- which have been drawn up by the [UK Space Agency](#) and the [Civil Aviation Authority](#), is the start to allow satellites to launch from UK soil for the first time – with spaceports (horizontal and vertical) planned for Scotland, Cornwall and Wales.

Future satellite launches are being seen as vital in improving access to data and communications, and revolutionising services such as satellite navigation and earth observation – enhancing the way we live, work, travel and interact, and above all our environmental management systems making life on earth more sustainable.

The Edinburgh-based firm – which aims to test launch its Skyrora XL rocket from the UK in 2022 – has welcomed the announcement and believes it is another chapter in the UK's rich rocket engineering history.

Volodymyr said: “The UK has moved a step closer to offering launch capabilities within the next year, signalling its intent to continue as a global power in the space economy. These regulations will help to unlock the huge economic opportunity that is launch in the UK and provide a number of options to get cutting-edge technology into orbit and create new commercial industries.

“Britain has a long heritage in rocket engineering, from Black Arrow 50 years ago, to the talent spread across the globe today, working in space organisations and private companies. With the steps taken today and different space ports being developed, the UK has an opportunity to bring much of that talent back home and inspire the next generation in an environmentally acceptable and responsible manner”.



The legislation will come into effect this summer, and will enable the UK to develop its commercial spaceflight technologies through a variety of different apparatus, from traditional rockets to high-altitude balloons and spaceplanes.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps, said: “This is a pivotal moment for our spaceflight ambitions. Since the start of the spaceflight programme in 2017, we have been clear that we want to be the first country to launch into orbit from Europe.

“The laying of these regulations puts us firmly on track to see the first UK launches take place from 2022, unlocking a new era in commercial spaceflight for all 4 corners of our nation.”

With the increase of new UK spaceport launches will come with the creation of new jobs and economic benefits to communities across the country, attracting countries from around the globe.

Science Minister, Amanda Solloway said: “Continuing to grow our launch capability will help bring jobs and economic

benefits across the UK. The Space Industry Regulations we've tabled today will create a supportive, attractive and safe environment for commercial spaceflight."

Volodymyr Levykin, said: "As an Edinburgh-based company, Skyrora is proud to be helping new generations of engineers gain vital, practical experience on launch vehicles to help shape the future of commercial space, where the focus is on the utilisation of environmentally responsible and sustainable technologies.

"Our Skyrora XL three-stage rocket is on track to be ready for launch in 2022, along with our space tug – which can play a pivotal role in efforts to clear space debris and we're proud that we'll be ready to offer these capabilities from UK soil."

Skyrora is emphasising its proprietary 'space tug' capability- which is an integral part of its main go-to-market Launch vehicle XL, and will play a crucial role in clearing redundant satellites and other so-called space junk.

The development is a key part of Skyrora's mission to place space sustainability as a crucial element in its planning and company vision. It has also developed a new way of launching satellites with minimal environment impact as well as creating an eco-friendly fuel that ensures the UK has the most environmentally friendly space industry in the world.

The company recently secured €3M funding from the European Space Agency, which will be used to complete Skyrora's XL programme to deliver consistent orbital launches from the UK.

Skyrora XL is a 23-metre, 56-tonne, three-stage rocket capable of carrying up to 315kg into orbit. The vehicle is on course to be test launched in 2022 from a UK spaceport and the project is set to generate 170 high-skilled jobs.

