



**NATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON SPACE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Secretariat: PO Box 9, Observatory 7935  
secretariat@space.gov.za

20 January 2005

Dear Stakeholder

**RE: SURVEY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SPACE ARENA**

Dear Sir/Madam

South Africa is critically reliant on space science and technology in a wide number of areas of direct practical and economic benefit, such as weather forecasting, communications, navigation, and so on. These space applications have been operationalised as global utilities whose use of outer space is largely transparent (and irrelevant) to the average user on the ground. Other services, such as remote sensing, bring the user into more direct contact with the space arena. Clearly, national competencies to harness space science and technology are an important component of maintaining and developing the technological capacity and human capital of the country.

In its broadest terms, the South African space arena comprises a broad spectrum of providers and users of space technology and its applications in government, industry, academia and the NGO sector. I am writing to request your kind assistance to establish a snapshot of the space arena in South Africa, as part of a wider process to optimise the use of space science and technology for sustainable development.

The National Working Group on Space Science & Technology is an inter-departmental government initiative to coordinate and promote the study and peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of South Africa and its people. The Working Group currently comprises representatives of the Department of Communications (co-chair), the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the Department of Science and Technology (co-chair), as well as representatives from various space science and technology organisations in the country. The Working Group is facilitating a process of harmonisation of various space science and technology activities in the country through consultation with stakeholders in government, academia, industry and the public.

The Government has identified the Aerospace industry as a sector that should be coordinated and promoted. We believe that the entire space arena stands to benefit from a convergence of national priorities and interests. This survey will enable us to identify and promote a number of strategic initiatives, based on the needs of both the users and providers of space science and technology products (hardware, data and services). The results of this survey will also be used in drafting a framework for the development, coordination and promotion of the space arena in South Africa.

We therefore request your kind assistance in assessing the current status and needs of the space arena in South Africa. The objective of this exercise is to give purposeful direction to future endeavours in the area of space science and technology and its applications by identifying the core competencies within key focus areas that require effective strengthening and development. In order to

accomplish this objective we need to gauge the current status of the various sectors of the space arena by drawing on your organisation's understanding and strategic thinking in this area.

The information that you provide through this survey will be treated as confidential and will not in any way be distributed to other respondents of the survey. We recognise that certain sections of this survey may be irrelevant to specific organisations, but request that you fill in as much information as possible regarding your organisation and its activities. Your comments are also solicited on other areas of space science and technology that may need to be developed to meet national imperatives.

If you have any enquiries, please contact Dr V Munsami at (012) 3943034 or Dr P Martinez at 082 777 1399. Please return the completed questionnaire, before 28 February 2005, to:

Dr V Munsami  
International Trade and Economic Development  
Department of Trade and Industry  
Private Bag X84  
Pretoria  
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Alternatively, please fax the completed questionnaire to Dr V Munsami at (012) 3944034 or email a completed electronic copy of the questionnaire, which is available at [www.space.gov.za/nwgsst](http://www.space.gov.za/nwgsst), to [munsami@thedti.gov.za](mailto:munsami@thedti.gov.za).

We thank you in anticipation for your contribution.



**Dr P Martinez**  
**SECRETARIAT**