

20 May 2024

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Dear [REDACTED]

INTRODUCTION TO ELA AND COMMUNICATION OF OUR LAUNCH ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES

[Introduction to ELA:](#)

Equatorial Launch Australia (ELA) owns and operates the Arnhem Space Centre (ASC) situated 15km south of Gove Airport near the East Arnhem township of Nhulunbuy, on the land of the Yolngu people. ELA subleases the site from the Gumatj Corporation (Gumatj), founded by the Traditional Owners in 2007. ELA's mission is to provide space launch services and sub-orbital and orbital access to space for commercial, research and government organisations. ELA's customers base is global small to medium sized space launch vehicles. The ASC is a key strategic asset in the Australian Space Agency's National Space Strategy.

Operations of Phase 1 of the ASC commenced in June/July 2022, with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) conducting a highly successful sub-orbital launch campaign. A key component of this success was the establishment of the ELA Safety and Retrieval Committee to support culturally-safe recovery operations of returning space hardware from homelands downrange of the launch site. ELA continues to work closely with Gumatj and use services including ARDS Aboriginal Corporation and Yolngu Radio to support culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders in the East Arnhem region and down range as required depending on each launch mission.

[ASC Phase 2 – Our approach to consultation and engagement:](#)

Currently ELA is seeking regulatory approvals for the Phase 2 expansion of the ASC. This development enables ELA to launch small to medium sized rockets (these are larger than those launched during the NASA campaign but still much smaller than Elon Musk's SpaceX Falcon 9) and more frequently, to meet the demands of our customers.

Australia has robust space law, regulation and policies in place to ensure the safe and responsible conduct of space activities. ELA is well progressed in securing the approvals required to support Phase 2's development and operations.

Before any activity can take place in Phase 2 of the ASC, ELA must obtain a *Launch Facility Licence* from the commonwealth minister responsible for the *Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018*, the Hon Ed Husic MP, Minister for Industry and Science. In addition, an *Australian Launch Permit* must be obtained prior to every launch. ELA has also applied for an updated Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Certificate in addition to NT and Commonwealth environmental approvals.

ELA is undertaking extensive consultation in accordance with NT and Commonwealth regulatory and governance obligations. ELA has adopted the International Association for Public Participation framework for community engagement (IAP2) and our Stakeholder and Engagement Plan (attached) describes how we intend to engage with stakeholders during the Phase 2 expansion and for future launch operations.

In the coming weeks, ELA will provide the Central Land Council with a hard copy of our *Supplementary Environmental Report* for display during the public consultation period of our environmental impact assessment by the NT EPA. An electronic copy of this documentation will be available on the NT EPA website.

As outlined on page 10 (of the attached Stakeholder and Engagement Plan) Aboriginal communities in the Central Land Council's region are not directly impacted by the site development, site operations or any up-range (close to site) activities of Phase 2 of the ASC. However, we are initiating contact with your organisation as it is our intention to consult appropriately in the event that future down-range activities (such as the return of a rocket booster) are proposed to occur within the Central Land Council's region.

We expect to be able to confirm if a proposed launch will have potential impact on the Central Australian region approximately nine months prior to the proposed launch date. In such an event, we propose to contact Central Land Council so we can work together to identify appropriate ways to consult, seek consent and manage the proposed activities in your region.

I welcome your feedback on this proposed approach to possible future engagements and look forward to building a productive relationship with the Central Land Council.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. T. O.', written in a cursive style.

**GM Operations and Launch
Equatorial Launch Australia**

Attachment - ASC Stakeholder and Engagement Plan