Dear Dr Clark,

As Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, I am pleased to write to you to outline my expectations for the Australian Space Agency (the Agency).

Since its establishment on 1 July 2018, the Agency has played an important role in re-igniting the Australian public’s interest in space. The Agency continues to raise awareness of the importance of the Australian space sector, in its own right for highly skilled jobs and scientific and technological developments, and for spill-overs to the national economy. Space is fundamental to the global competitiveness of other key sectors such as agriculture, resources, transportation and communications, as well as new sectors of the economy.

I am pleased with the significant achievements of the Agency in its first year of operation, and I thank you and the Agency staff for their hard work. This has included forging important domestic and international partnerships, overseeing changes in legislation to ensure that it is easier for our domestic industry to participate in the space sector, as well as putting in place the Australian Civil Space Strategy (Strategy) and the Agency’s Charter.

The Strategy and the Agency’s Charter clearly set out the Australian Government’s vision and long-term plan for the space sector and I expect the Agency to continue to undertake the work in supporting the sector’s growth and transformation.

This Statement of Expectations is complementary to the Agency’s Charter and Strategy, and outlines my expectations of the Agency. I acknowledge that there are activities over the short, medium and longer term in delivering on the Government’s vision for the sector, as outlined in the Strategy.

I look forward to continuing our work together in building a globally respected and competitive space sector.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Andrews  

2 / 9 / 2019  
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Statement of Expectations for the Australian Space Agency

Implementing the Australian Government’s strategy and commitments
I expect the Agency to focus its efforts and resourcing to implement the Australian Civil Space Strategy, which is the Government’s plan to transform and grow our space sector over the next ten years. As complemented by the Charter, the Agency should work closely with relevant departments including the Department of Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to ensure a cohesive civil space strategy. In exercising its functions and meeting its objectives the Agency should support the Government to build a strong and competitive space sector, with world-leading capabilities aligned with the National Civil Space Priorities as outlined in the Strategy.

This should include a focus on strong engagement within industry and small and medium enterprises, as well as the research sector to ensure a pipeline of world-class technology to support the transformation of the sector. It will also be important to leverage the capabilities of CSIRO and Geoscience Australia in delivering on the Strategy.

The Agency should deliver on the Government’s commitments including to establish the Space Infrastructure Fund and the International Space Investment Initiative. In doing so, the Agency should demonstrate the benefits of the investment in terms of jobs, business opportunities and collaboration, as well as the global opportunities from enhanced coordination of funding and capitalising on international engagement.

The Agency should continue to work with the South Australian Government to establish its headquarters at Lot Fourteen in Adelaide along with a mission control facility and Australian Space Discovery Centre. The Space Discovery Centre provides the Australian community, students and visitors a unique opportunity to engage with the latest innovations in space technologies, expand their understanding of Australia’s role in national and global space activities and inspire the next generation of space professionals.

Building on Australia’s space regulatory framework
I thank the Agency for its work on the Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018 (the Act) and establishing the subordinate legislation which commenced on 31 August 2019. It is important to provide a regulatory environment that balances entrepreneurship with safety along with meeting Australia’s domestic and international obligations. I expect the Agency to continue to provide advice on regulatory reform. With this in mind I look forward to the Agency’s activities in implementing an appropriate risk framework to support the Act. I look forward to advice on other regulatory issues the Government needs to consider to ensure Australia’s regulatory system is appropriate to the Australian context, considers the practice of other nations and anticipates possible future issues (such as space tourism).

With the forecasted growth in space activities, I also look forward to the Agency’s support in considering applications under the Act. The implementation of this framework is essential to providing certainty for participants in these activities.

Establishing and deepening relationships
I expect that the Agency continue to work across government and with the international space community and industry to support the Australian space sector’s overall performance towards achieving the target of tripling the size of the space economy and creating a further 20,000 new jobs by 2030. This target could be supported by continuing to build on MOUs with international space agencies and domestic and international industry to ensure effective engagement and forging new collaborative opportunities with the European Space Agency and NASA. I expect the Agency to investigate future opportunities in space, including the role of
Australia in supporting future missions, for example leveraging our strengths outlined in the Strategy such as robotics and automation and future areas like optical communications.

The Agency should bed down its consultation forums for engaging government and industry stakeholders, including the Space Industry Leaders Forum. In particular, the Agency should deepen its collaborations with state and territory governments and international agencies to ensure that activities and initiatives can be leveraged in developing and growing the Australian space sector and effort and to meet the vision set out in the Strategy.

**Opportunities in growing our space capabilities**

In implementing the Strategy, I expect the Agency to continue to look for new opportunities to grow Australia’s civil space sector. In order to expand its understanding of the sector, and to shine a light on new opportunities, the Agency should consider the development of roadmaps for the growth of each of the National Civil Space Priorities.

I have publicly indicated that I will be taking every opportunity to encourage space tourism providers to investigate Australia as a partner. To support me in this endeavor, the Agency should develop plans that investigate the feasibility, initial actions, and timeframes for developing space tourism in Australia, as well as options for Australians to participate in human space flight.

The Agency should continue to reinforce the role space plays in improving the lives of Australians, impacts of the space sector on the economy and its important role in supporting STEM activities. A vibrant space industry will contribute to providing greater certainty and future-proofing for Australian business and our economy, for example through emerging technologies such as quantum cryptography, artificial intelligence and the application of optical communications. A dedicated Australian space industry will also change how we live and work in remote and regional Australia, for example through application of space-based Internet of Things (IoT) technologies.

The Agency should also work closely with my department as it develops manufacturing and technology strategies and provide input where appropriate on how space activities can support these policies going forward. Informed by the Strategy, this future-looking work will inform the Government’s consideration of opportunities, and the most effective ways to invest and grow Australia’s civil space sector for all Australians.

**Ensuring sound governance and measuring impact**

The Agency should ensure that it has an appropriate evaluation framework and metrics in place to enable robust measurement and reviews of the progress towards the targets to build the space economy in Australia. The Agency should provide me with regular updates on progress. As per the Charter, the Agency should also continue to provide the annual State of the Space report to Government which documents the Australian Government’s activities in civil space.

I expect the Agency to keep me and my department fully informed by providing timely advice on space industry matters and promptly advise of any events or issues that may impact on the operations of the Agency.

Karen Andrews

2/9/2019