

AUSTRALIA

National mechanisms:

The *Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018* includes a requirement for a debris mitigation strategy for certain authorisations (those involving objects going to space). The *Space (Launches and Returns) (General) Rules 2019* indicate that the strategy must be based on an internationally recognised guideline or standard for debris mitigation. An application for an overseas payload permit or Australian launch permit must identify the guideline or standard being used, which may include the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee or Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines.

Space debris mitigation requirements are outlined in the *Space (Launches and Returns) Act 2018* (the Act) and *Space (Launches and Returns) (General) Rules 2019* (the Rules).

Description:

The Act commenced on 31 August 2019 and amends the *Space Activities Act 1998*. Applications for the launch of an Australian space object overseas or a launch to space from Australia include consideration of the space environment, including space debris. The Act includes the requirement for a debris mitigation strategy for certain authorisations (those involving objects going to space), which is further supplemented by the Rules.

A debris mitigation strategy must:

- Be based on an internationally recognised guideline or standard for debris mitigation;
- Identify the guideline or standard being used;
- Describe any mitigation measures planned for orbital debris arising from the proposed launch; and
- Include an orbital debris assessment.

Applicability:

The Act and Rules are binding Australian legislation. The Act outlines certain obligations on the Commonwealth.

Relation to international mechanisms:

- An object of the Act is to implement certain of Australia's obligations under the UN Space Treaties. This object is implemented in various ways. For example, the Rules indicate that:
 - Certain applications must include a declaration that the space object is not and does not contain a nuclear weapon or weapon of mass destruction;

- Information consistent with the Registration Convention must be provided in certain cases.
- Examples of internationally recognised guidelines or standards for debris mitigation, include:
 - Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; and
 - The IADC Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines.

Link to other national mechanisms:

None.

References:

[Space \(Launches and Returns\) Act 2018](#)

[Space \(Launches and Returns\) \(General\) Rules 2019](#)