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for Transport

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*Dear Chris,*

31 October 2017

I am writing in response to your request on 18 October 2017 during Lords Committee of the Space Industry Bill for further information on the basic criteria used in the traffic light system licencing system.

The traffic light system is currently a pre-application screening process used by the UK Space Agency which provides prospective licence applicants under the Outer Space Act 1986 with an indicative assessment of the likely outcome of a safety review of their proposed mission. Prospective applicants are invited to provide responses to a series of initial technical questions (see below). A triage review is then performed by UK Space Agency's technical team and feedback provided to the applicant.

As I said in Committee, "Green" rating indicates that the mission is likely to be compliant with the operational and design measures that the UK recognises as part of its licensing process. "Amber" indicates that with some modification or additional information provision, the mission could be compliant. "Red" indicates that the mission could not be licensed.

Missions vary in the nature of their launch to space, the orbits they operate within, and the operational activities they will perform, in addition to the design of the vehicles themselves and how they are operated. In the context of small satellites and Cubesats, "green" may be related to a Cubesat built to a recognised design standard launched by an established and reliable launch vehicle into an orbit where it presents a low risk to other satellites and carries out mission activities which are unlikely to interfere with other space systems. "Amber" may relate to a Cubesat which is proposed to be launched into a high altitude orbit where it could collide with other satellites but which with a reduction in altitude may be considered acceptable for licence issue. "Red" may relate to a mission proposing to use an unreliable launcher with a satellite not designed to industry standards being injected into an orbit where

it is likely to collide with high value satellites (including the International Space Station) and presents liability and reputational risks to UK.

Example questions currently used to assess risk include:

- What is the name/designation of the launch system?
- What is the primary function of the platform and its payload(s)?
- Does the platform conform to an internationally recognised or industrial standard?
- Are there multiple platforms on the launch?
- What are the injection and operational altitudes of stages/platforms?
- What is the name of the site or range?
- What is the range of times and dates for launch epoch/launch window?
- Are there any unique aspects of launch and injection?
- What are the durations of the different phases of the mission?
- If re-entry will occur, is it controlled or uncontrolled?

I hope this provides you with the information you were seeking. I am copying this letter to other peers who spoke during Lords Committee and I will place a copy in the library of both Houses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sugg', written in a cursive style.

**BARONESS SUGG CBE**