

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

SPACE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME BOARD

**Space Situational Awareness Advisory Group
Terms of Reference**

Summary

A Space Situational Awareness Advisory Group (SSA-AG) will be established to advise the ESA Director responsible for the SSA programme on operational, scientific and technical aspects of SSA activities, and to ensure a close collaboration between ESA and the SSA-related expert communities.

This document presents to Delegations the Terms of Reference for the SSA-AG which have been revised based on comments received from delegations at the PB-SSA meeting in May 2013.

Required Action

The Space Situational Awareness Programme Board is invited to take note of the revised Terms of Reference for the SSA Advisory Group.

Next Steps

In accordance with the attached Terms of Reference, the members of the SSA-AG will be appointed by the end of September. The first meeting of the SSA-AG will be held approximately four weeks before the PB-SSA meeting on 04 December 2013. The following one would be approximately four weeks before the PB-SSA meeting on 13 May 2014.

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Space Situational Awareness Advisory Group (SSA-AG) Terms of Reference

1. Mission and Purpose

The Space Situational Awareness Advisory Group (SSA-AG) advises the ESA Director responsible for the Space Situational Awareness (SSA) Programme on all matters concerning the definition and implementation of SSA activities, and in particular on the scientific, operational and technical aspects of the three domains of the SSA Programme, i.e. Space Weather (SWE), Near Earth Objects (NEO) and Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST).

The main purpose of the SSA-AG is to ensure a close collaboration between ESA and the related expert communities on SSA-related activities, as well as to provide independent advice and/or recommendations to the ESA Director responsible for the SSA Programme in the SSA domains in order to support the decision-making process.

The SSA-AG is an advisory body only. It does not have any decision-making power. Decisions regarding the SSA Programme remain the responsibility of the ESA Executive and the SSA Programme Board.

2. Membership of SSA-AG

The SSA-AG is composed of 10 to 12 members. Those members are experts in one of the SSA domains and recognised at European level. They may be from the scientific community, industry, the user community or a service provider. They are appointed by the ESA Director. The membership shall reflect an equitable balance between the SSA domains.

Members are chosen from Member States participating in the SSA programme. An exception may however be made if a required type of expertise is available only outside the participating Member States.

Members may be accompanied at meetings by a limited number of advisors specialised in the topic of discussion. The ESA Director may also invite other experts to attend meetings to address specific matters. Participation will however be limited to a minimum in order to ensure a constructive and effective discussion. The PB-SSA Chair is invited ex-officio to attend meetings as an observer.

Members are appointed for a period of three years, with the possibility of a one-year extension. The PB-SSA will be informed of the membership of the SSA-AG and of any new appointments.

3. SSA-AG Chairperson

The ESA Director designates a Chairperson from among the SSA-AG members for a period of two years, with the possibility of a one-year extension.

The ESA Director appoints an Executive Secretary from among the Directorate's staff, to assist the Chairperson. The SSA-AG Chairperson maintains a close coordination with the ESA Director and the Directorate's staff to optimise the SSA-AG's support to the overall SSA programme.

4. Tasks

The main task of the SSA-AG is to examine and monitor issues related to the scientific, operational and technological aspects of the SSA Programme. At the specific request of the Director, the SSA-AG may also address other issues.

Specifically, the SSA-AG examines, advises and/or makes recommendations on:

- The needs of the SSA user communities on matters related to SSA-related technology, developments and operations.
- The priorities of the SSA stakeholders in the implementation of the requirements.
- The formulation of policy governing the development and operation of each of the SSA segments in Europe.
- The studies and activities required to lay the foundation for the future strategic developments in each of the SSA segments.
- The selection of new instruments, space and ground-based sensors and activities for the enhancement of the European SSA capability.

In addition, the SSA-AG:

- Facilitates coordination of operational, scientific, research and technology activities with national programmes and activities within the domains relevant to the SSA programme, in order to exploit synergies and foster harmonisation.
- Undertakes specific tasks requested by the Director on matters relating to the SSA Programme.

5. Operating modalities

The SSA-AG meets two times per year. The timing of meetings is coordinated with those of PB-SSA and SSA-AG meetings are held four weeks beforehand, generally in the months of April and November. Additional meetings may be held as necessary and must be jointly agreed between the Chairperson and the Director.

Meetings are held at an ESA site. Members' and the PB-SSA Chair's travel to and from meetings is reimbursed based on ESA Travel regulations. Costs should be kept to a minimum. A *per diem* is not provided. Advisors' and experts' travel will only be covered if ESA specifically invites them to participate in a meeting.

The SSA-AG's working language is English.

The Executive Secretary prepares the draft agenda of each SSA-AG meeting in close consultation with the Chairperson and the Director.

The Chairperson reports the SSA-AG's findings, advice and/or recommendations to the Director. The findings, advice and/or recommendations must reflect opinions expressed by all members of the SSA-AG in addition to those of the majority. The Director reports regularly to the PB-SSA on the SSA-AG's work, including its findings, advice and/or recommendations.

ESA will support the SSA-AG as necessary to accomplish its tasks.