



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Chris Penk	Portfolio	Space
Title of Cabinet paper	Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences Permits and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026	Date to be published	11 June 2026

List of documents that have been proactively released

Date	Title	Author
8 April 2026	Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences Permits and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026	Office for the Minister for Space
30 April 2026	Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences Permits and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026 LEG-26-MIN-0068 Minute	Cabinet Office
8 April 2026	Briefing: Cabinet Paper – Introduction of ground-based space infrastructure regulations	MBIE

Information redacted

YES

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld to protect the privacy of natural persons.

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Office of the Minister for Space
Chair, Cabinet Legislation Committee

Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences and Permits, and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026

Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks authorisation to submit to the Executive Council the amendments to the Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences and Permits) Regulations 2017 which includes application information requirements for the new ground-based space infrastructure regulatory regime.

Executive Summary

- 2 This paper seeks agreement to submit the Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences, Permits, and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026 to the Executive Council. The regulations have been prepared by the Parliamentary Counsel Office and give effect to Cabinet's earlier policy decision [ECO-26-MIN-0013 refers] on establishing regulations to implement the ground-based space infrastructure (GBSI) authorisation regime agreed to by Cabinet in July 2025 [LEG-25-SUB-0135] and set out in the Outer Space and High-altitude Activities Act 2017.
- 3 Amendments to the Act introduced a requirement for operators of GBSI to hold a GBSI activity authorisation in order to operate infrastructure that supports regulated activities. Transitional provisions treat existing operators as authorised until 29 July 2026.
- 4 The regulations set the application requirements GBSI operators must meet once the new regime takes effect, replacing the temporary transitional authorisations currently in place.
- 5 The regulations are now ready for Cabinet approval and referral to the Executive Council so that they can be made and published ahead of commencement of the new regime.

Policy

- 6 The Outer Space and High-altitude Activities Act 2017 (the Act) establishes a regulatory framework for space and high-altitude activities to protect New Zealand's national interests, meet international obligations, and support the safe and secure development of the space sector.
- 7 The Act anticipates that secondary legislation will prescribe the information that must be provided in an application for a GBSI activity authorisation. The principal

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regulations do not currently set out these requirements, which would leave decision-makers without a clear legal basis to assess applications.

- 8 The policy objective of the proposed regulations is to operationalise the GBSI activity authorisation regime by clearly specifying the information that applicants must provide, enabling consistent, lawful, and risk-based decision-making by the Minister for Space.
- 9 The amended regulations give effect to this policy by extending existing application provisions in the Regulations, so they apply to GBSI activity authorisations and inserting a new Schedule that prescribes the information required for a GBSI activity authorisation application.
- 10 The information requirements are structured to reflect the different ways in which GBSI may be operated and the different risk profiles associated with those uses. All applicants must provide baseline information about:
 - 10.1 the location of the GBSI;
 - 10.2 the general nature of the technology used to carry out regulated activities; and
 - 10.3 the equipment used to carry out those activities.
- 11 The information required about regulated activities differs depending on whether the applicant proposes to operate the GBSI for their own benefit or on behalf of a partner. Where an applicant proposes to operate GBSI to carry out regulated activities for the benefit of the applicant, the applicant must provide:
 - 11.1 a general description of the regulated activities;
 - 11.2 a description of the relevant space objects; and
 - 11.3 what those space objects will be used for.
- 12 Where an applicant proposes to operate GBSI on behalf of or for the benefit of a partner, the information requirements differ depending on the nature of that partner:
- 13 For research collaborators, the applicant must provide:
 - 13.1 a general description of the regulated activities;
 - 13.2 partner identity information; and
 - 13.3 a description of the purpose of the research;
- 14 For other partners, such as commercial customers, the applicant must provide
 - 14.1 a general description of the regulated activities; and
 - 14.2 partner identity information.
- 15 The amended regulations define partner identity information in a structured way, with requirements tailored to whether the partner is an individual, a body corporate, or

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another type of entity. This ensures sufficient transparency to assess risks associated with third-party use of GBSI, without imposing unnecessary information requirements.

Timing

- 16 The regulations will come into force on 29th July 2026 following notification in the Gazette after regulations are agreed.

Compliance

- 17 The regulations comply with:
- 17.1 the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi;
 - 17.2 Treaty of Waitangi provisions;
 - 17.3 the rights and freedoms contained in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 or the Human Rights Act 1993;
 - 17.4 the principles and guidelines set out in the Privacy Act 2020;
 - 17.5 relevant international standards and obligations;
 - 17.6 the Legislation Guidelines.

Regulations Review Committee

- 18 I do not consider there to be grounds for the Regulations Review Committee to draw these regulations to the attention of the House of Representatives under Standing Order 327.

Certification by Parliamentary Counsel

- 19 The draft regulations were certified by the Parliamentary Counsel Office (PCO) as being in order for submission to Cabinet.

Impact Analysis

- 20 A regulatory impact assessment was determined to not be needed due to the minor and technical nature of the changes, and their consistency with the existing Act. Referral can be made to the impact statement prepared for the primary legislation.

Publicity

- 21 Information will be made available to interested parties on the MBIE website, including access to the application form.
- 22 I intend for my Office to release a statement publicising the final decisions on the regime and inviting operators to begin applying.

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Proactive release

- 23 I propose to proactively release this paper within 30 business days of Cabinet confirming the decisions.

Consultation

- 24 In 2025 targeted stakeholder engagement was conducted with the industry, including a consultation document on the policy and individual engagement with specific operators. Over 20 current or future operators were consulted, and all responses were supportive of the regulations, with some examples suggested by the industry for clarity.
- 25 Consultation on this Cabinet paper was also conducted with the New Zealand Security Intelligence Services, Government Communications Security Bureau, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade and Land Information New Zealand.

Recommendations

I recommend that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 note that on 18 February 2026 the Cabinet Economic Policy Committee agreed to set application information requirements in regulations for the ground-based space infrastructure regulatory regime (PCO) [ECO-26-MIN-0013 refers]
- 2 note that the Amendment to Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences and Permits, and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026 will give effect to the decision referred to in paragraph 1 above by prescribing the information required for an application for a GBSI activity authorisation;
- 3 Note the Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences, Permits, and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026 are proposed to come into force on 29 July and meet the 28-day rule requirements;
- 4 authorise the submission to the Executive Council of the Amendment to Outer Space and High-altitude Activities (Licences and Permits, and Authorisations) Amendment Regulations 2026

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Chris Penk

Minister for Space