



## Space Agency Act blasts off

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By Audra Mahlong Posted: 16th January 2009

President Kgalema Motlanthe has signed the National Space Agency Act Bill into law.

This will allow for the creation of the SA National Space Agency (Sansa), a public entity that will be tasked with the co-ordination and integration of various national space science and technology programmes. It will also conduct long-term planning for and implementation of space-related activities in SA.

The Department of Science and Technology stated the agency would be responsible for the promotion of the peaceful use of outer space; foster research in astronomy, earth observation, communications, navigation and space physics; foster international cooperation in space-related activities; and advance scientific, engineering and technological competencies through human capital development.

The first step towards establishing the agency would be to appoint a board of 10 to 15 members, a CEO, and a chairperson who will be appointed by the science and technology minister.

Some of the projects Sansa would coordinate include the 1.5 billion euro Square Kilometre Array, the SA Large Telescope, a mooted new telescope at Matjiesfontein, and SA's second indigenous satellite, Sumbandilasat.

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