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## 1. Czech Space Office mission

The Czech Space Office's (CSO) mission is stipulated in its founding document, according to which CSO's objective is overall promotion of the development of Czech space activities and space research, specifically:

- Promote space operations and space research that contribute to the knowledge society, to innovation and competitiveness in industry.
- Help that Czech Republic contributes to and benefits from European space cooperation, and receives benefits the space has potential to provide in various social and economic areas.

CSO also plays a key role as the expert authority in national and international contexts.

CSO is point of contact and professional consultancy partner providing information both to decision makers and industry organisations in the Czech Republic as well as internationally.

CSO personnel contributed to work of five ESA committees and program boards, EU GMES Advisory Group and the 7th FP Space programme committee. CSO has been represented in the Czech PRODEX Committee supporting the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in management of the Czech scientific experiments development for ESA missions.

The Czech Space Office is a member of the International Astronautical Federation and an associated member of Eurisy organisation.

### 1.1. Strategy and fields of activity

General strategy corresponds to the Czech Republic specifics requiring to find and take an optimum place as a small space-faring nation. The main feature of the Czech Space Office mission include fostering intensive and wide engagement of the Czech Republic in international space programmes by promotion of the peaceful use of space and its benefits.

The performance of the Czech Space Office when fulfilling its strategic goals is consisting of several categories of activities:

- Analysis and studies about Czech participation in space programs and projects.
- Consultancy and seminars about space project opportunities and project administration.
- Promotion of Czech space organisations at major international events.
- Support of education and student space projects.

The mentioned activities are performed to reach the defined objectives given by specified indicators. The picture resulting from 2013 activities is given in the report in following sections:

- Science and Technology development.
- Efficient communication and management.
- Education and outreach.
- International relations.

## **1.2. Staff and governance**

The Czech Space Office is run with status of independent non-profit organisation and it is managed according the Czech respective law. In compliance with the law, the Managing Board and Supervisory Board are the key ruling as well as advising bodies of the CSO. They meet regularly throughout the year and provide management guidance to the Director on the Czech Space Office's performance, operations, budget control as well as on current priorities and future opportunities in which the CSO should participate, both at a national and international level. The management and control structure has been built around senior experts from space research, management and public sector.

The CSO workforce during 2013 comprised 8 people professionally covering main topic fields of space research and development, documents publication and general internal administration, travel and financial services. Financial resources used by CSO in 2013 stemmed from a grant project awarded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and an educational project from the EU Structural Funds. The overall budget available for the Czech Space Office performance continued to decline after politically driven transition of governmental responsibility for space from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to the Ministry of Transport in 2011.

## **2. Sustainable engagement in space**

The Czech Space Office provides support to Czech academic and private research teams to be successful in their competition on an international platform. It assists and advises for activities with strong involvement in ESA and other bilateral science missions and projects. The research projects, in which the Czech researchers participate, are a key condition to secure sustainable Czech participation in space programmes and to keep long-term access to benefits the space brings to entire society.

In strategic outlook the Czech Space Office is repeatedly proposing to respective ministries to create a modest space technology programme which might bring together academia and industry in developing the next generation technologies required for future missions.

The Czech Space Office made an important step to make the space more accessible to Czech researchers, students and educators. What is the first case of direct cooperation agreement between the Czech entity and provider of access to space, the Czech Space Office signed the final agreement with the US XCOR Aerospace Inc. in second half of 2013. Having a working partnership with XCOR Aerospace, one of the pioneers and world leaders in commercial spaceflight, is an important step in bringing the benefits of space closer to Czech society. Direct involvement in the use of the Lynx suborbital spacecraft presents a unique and accessible opportunity to develop critical national science and education capabilities, and inspire new ways of thinking and execution of space-based research.

The Czech Space Office will help facilitate and provision flight services on Lynx by ensuring end users understand the packaging, environmental, safety, operational flight profile and interface (physical, electrical and data) requirements of the Lynx for both automated experiments, not requiring user intervention during flight, and those experiments when the scientist accompanies the payload to the edge of space. Additional value added services will include fabrication, test, and qualification of experiments in accordance with XCOR Aerospace requirements.

## **2.1. Consultancy service on new opportunities in space**

Consultations with interested academic, industry and public sector organisations have been driven by the goal to advance domestic technologies to higher technology readiness levels. This will support industry's ability to accelerate innovation, expand sales in the commercial space market and reinforce the Czech position as a stronger player in future international space programmes.

Due to the ever growing complexity of space programs, consulting and advisory services supporting the successful use of new opportunities for scientific research and technology development are even more needed. The Czech Space Office receives requests for information from government, private and academia sector as well as a significant volume of public queries. Content is wide-ranging and covers issues from space policy to requests for careers advice.

Over the last year there were:

- 7 ministerial cases
- 2 parliamentary contacts
- 25 consultations with industry
- 23 consultations with research entity
- 12 public queries

Advisory services requested by some government authorities focused on the status of space activities in the Czech Republic, particularly the effective use of Czech participation in both optional and mandatory ESA programmes and inputs for positions to related ESA and EU meetings and documents. CSO assisted members of parliament with preparation for the 15th Inter-parliamentary Conference and potential attendance at the 64th International Astronautical Congress.

Discussions with organisations dealt mainly with general description of involvement procedures in space projects. When requested, the follow-on consultations included CSO assistance in search for suitable foreign partners or an advice on specific problems encountered in the preparation for ESA project. CSO provided almost 50 consultancy services in the fields of space technology, space applications, space weather and microgravity research to industry and academia clients and partners, that indicates significant potential of the Czech technology and research community.

Benefiting from its membership in the IAF's International Project Management Committee, CSO has nominated two employees of different Czech companies to NASA for participation in the space project management course held in February 2014 at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Through this channel CSO can negotiate a unique offer for the Czech professionals to get skills in the extraordinary qualification of the space project management at international environment.

CSO continues to provide technical consultancy services to industries and R&D institutions in diverse areas of its expertise.

Research through space is substantial in permanent process of increasing our knowledge from the natural phenomena at our planet and its surroundings, on the Sun and other planets to fundamental physics and the origins of our Universe. The same scientific research is driving technological advances and underpins innovation - a key driver of economic growth - into terrestrial industries.

Rapidly evolving space programmes bring various new opportunities in short time intervals. The Czech Space Office makes an effort to help Czech researchers be involved in ESA and other international science missions and projects. CSO keeps updated its service of timely and directly distributed information about new occasions for space research and development of new space technology.

### **Microgravity research**

A unique opportunity for research areas which use the effects of microgravity and other aspects of the space environment, such as radiation, isolation and exposure is provided by ELIPS programme in ESA. It is based on utilisation of ESA's Columbus laboratory on the International Space Station providing an ideal platform for long duration experiments. In addition to the ISS, ELIPS provides access to sounding rockets, drop towers, bed rest, parabolic flights and ground based facilities.

CSO consultancy meetings primarily included research institutes involved in biology, physiology, medicine and materials science having already experienced capacity. Along with one experiment on the ISS, CSO assisted four institutions to prepare project proposals for scientific use of the Concordia station in Antarctica.

### **Earth and surroundings**

Czech academic institutions are undertaking high-level research to study natural phenomena in magnetosphere, the ionosphere and Earth's surface. Private companies, small and media enterprises, are looking for new opportunities in development of advanced satellite data processing and for projects allowing preparation of new information services using satellite data. CSO has presented wide spectrum of such opportunities in the ESA Earth Observation Envelope Programme to several companies and universities. Specifically, consideration of future use of data from European satellites for research of Earth gravitation field was the topic. Consulting the ESA's request for information for the Thematic Earth Observation Exploitation Platforms resulted in joint bid of the Czech companies submitted for the invitation to tender. CSO also informed about Swarm satellites launch in November with Czech micro-accelerometers on board.

Another potentials for Czech researchers involvement in this field has also been offered by the ESA Space Situational Awareness programme combining the issues of space debris, near Earth asteroids and space weather.

### **Telecommunications systems**

Opportunities for the Czech organisations in space hardware and software development for telecommunication are open in ESA's Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems programme. CSO has distributed relevant information to some organisations in the Czech telecommunication development industry in this very competitive sector with worldwide market. On the other side, opportunity is not only in high level development of new parts in telecommunication chain but also in testing of new applications integrating satellite data acquired or transmitted by satellites. The public sector is a major user of data and information acquired via space as communications, navigation information, and Earth observation images. The rapidly increasing quantity and types of data have the potential to deliver information helpful to central and local government, as well as citizens.

### **Space technology development**

The Czech Space Office supports the drivers of technological development, enabling them to acquire and preserve the competencies needed to firmly establish themselves in a very competitive environment. Innovative technologies bring a great value added when the transition from new to standardised technology is successfully achieved.

The CSO recognises that in order to maximise opportunities and return from country's investments at ESA, a national technology programme is required not only to prepare its community for opportunities that arise but also to ultimately influence the direction of technology programmes at ESA and beyond. The main vision and the aim of the programme should deliver space qualified technologies and instruments in the longer term.

The majority of requirements handled by CSO in last twelve months dealt with possible participation in ESA's General Support Technology Programme. This programme is particularly important for SMEs and equipment suppliers who can work with European partners using its opportunities for push the technological level of existing product into higher level.

Consultation the project opportunities in ESA GSTP programme resulted in preselection of four activities and submission of one of them to respective national delegates to ESA.

Specific consultancy on the European Space Components Coordination certification process was given to the company interested to become an ESA qualified supplier of harness. Several discussions took place with developer of a technological satellite 3U CubeSat. CSO was also advising in one of the proposals for the Czech ESA BIC.

## Launchers

Despite its content seeming inapplicable for Czech technology capabilities, some institutions and companies succeeded to get projects in the ESA Future Launchers Preparatory Programme. Opportunities in the programme include studies and research activities to foster new technologies capable of delivering high performance and reliability of existing and future European launchers coupled with reduced operational costs. Another option is the programme Centre Spatial Guyanais, which focuses on the development and maintenance of Europe's space port Kourou in French Guiana. CSO is aware of this opportunity and aims to exploit this chance while supporting Czech organisations in the participation in both programmes.

## 2.2. Workshops and seminars

CSO is active in organising workshops to identify promising future missions and technologies. In 2013, three seminars were prepared with nearly 70 experts from 44 organisations attending these events.

Seminar on the ESA Earth Observation was organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, ESA and the Ministry of Transport. The main objective of the workshop was to increase understanding and participation of Czech research and development institutions in the ESA Earth Observation Envelope Programme. Part of the seminar was devoted to the EU Copernicus programme and the development of a second generation of MetOp satellites.

Workshop on biological and astrobiological research in microgravity conditions was aimed to inform the scientific community about planned ESA call on experiments proposal for accomplishment on the International Space Station after 2016.

An information day on Horizon 2020 Space programme was prepared in cooperation with the National Point of Contact. The first call of the programme was the topic of the seminar. Presentations were given on main themes of the call covering application development in Galileo and Copernicus systems, space weather and development of space technology, space science and exploration of the solar system.

### 3. Communications

Space development, related technology, knowledge and space based services are touching all facets of human life in the country. Task of great importance in the Czech Space Office work plan is creating awareness among the general public, especially young people, about the benefits that can be achieved from participation in space programme. Great effort has been given to organisation of exhibitions, publications, educational activities like lectures, interactive sessions with students and media campaigns on important events.

Through its communications efforts, the Czech Space Office is highlighting how important the space and satellite industry is to the Czech Republic. Space is critical in providing high-speed broadband, high definition television, GPS and weather forecasting to the modern world. The Czech Space Office staff continued working to keep people up to date with the latest news and developments in this exciting and inspirational field.

#### 3.1. Press conference and press releases

CSO held the press conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the Czech Space Office in November 2013. The topics presented to about two dozen participants covered description of the current CSO activities supporting the space development in the Czech Republic. Official announcement was published about cooperation agreement CSO signed with US company XCOR Aerospace, one of the global leaders in commercial spaceflight developing a vehicle for suborbital flights. The press conference also included presentations by representatives of the Aerospace Research and Test Establishment in Prague and the Institute of Experimental and Applied Physics of the Czech Technical University. They presented their work in space research and also reviewed their existing cooperation with CSO.

In order to share information about CSO activities, several press releases were issued in 2013. They highlighted most important events in the Czech space, including new space science programmes, CSO participation at the IAC, the 10th anniversary of the CSO, signature of the agreement with XCOR Aerospace and launch of Swarm satellites with the Czech microaccelerometers. The Czech Space Office activities have been followed by the media quite extensively. In 2013, CSO has been cited or reported more than 250 times in electronic or paper newspapers and magazines, as well in the radio and television news.

### **3.2. Web information**

Website is the main channel, that the Czech Space Office uses for distribution of wide range of information including opportunities for involvement in ESA and EU programs, results of completed projects with Czech participation, information about seminars and training opportunities for students, as well as on the latest developments in the Czech space science and industry.

The website has been operated in the Czech and English languages. English version contains articles informing about the Czech activities and achievements, information adopted from otherwise accessible foreign sources is given only in Czech.

The reader can find the requested information either by area of interest (e.g. general technology, microgravity research, Earth observation, education) or by the type of content (e.g. news, programs, publications, opportunities). Publications such as the annual report, the Czechspace magazine and educational articles are also available for free download.

Over the last twelve months there have been around 2,200 visitors to the site each month and more than 73,000 separate page views across the whole year.

Social media is another important mean of direct Office's communication with wide audience. People can now follow us on digital channels such as Twitter, Google Plus and Facebook. The Facebook profile has been created especially for the purpose of addressing a community of young people who often use social networks. This kind of communication allows closer contact with the reader and provides interactive feedback. It is also used to publish photos or videos. During the last twelve months, the number of Facebook followers has increased to almost 700. The total number of users who have seen any content associated with a CSO Facebook page was 24,299 representing an average of 67 unique visitors per day.

### **3.3. Electronic newsletter**

Electronic newsletter includes a brief annotation about the last month news published on the CSO website with a link to the full text. Newsletter has been regularly distributed free of charge every month to subscribers counting now over 360.

### 3.4. Printed publications

Along with the electronic publications, CSO has prepared and distributed significant number of documents in the paper form, as well. During twelve month in 2013 there were published:

- 2 issues of the Czechspace magazine (number 7 and 8)
- 10 information sheets on projects (factsheets)
- Brochure Czech Space Activities
- Czech Space Catalogue
- 2 newsletters Centre of Student Activities CSO
- 3 info sheets on Copernicus programme
- Report on the participation of Czech Republic in the 7th Framework Programme in Space

### 3.5. Magazine Czechspace

Two issues of the bi-yearly, 28-page Czechspace magazine were released at the end of the first and the second semester respectively.

The number seven of the magazine observed the recent launch of European Proba-V satellite carrying the Czech experiment SATRAM tasked to measure cosmic rays. Other topics were participation of Czech scientists in GOCE mission with description of interesting applications using its satellite data and the design study of a space station by students of high school winning an award in NASA competition.

The eighth issue highlighted the tenth anniversary of the Czech Space Office. Several articles described the Office's history and the most important results of its work.

Each issue was printed in 1,000 copies and distributed free of charge among 350 interested users - experts, politicians and enthusiasts. The magazine copies have also been handed out to participants at seminars, conferences and consultancy meetings. Moreover, an electronic version of the complete issue has been downloaded from the CSO web page about 400-500 times.

### 3.6. Project Fact-sheets

In 2013, the Czech Space Office further extended a package of standard printed sheets describing completed space projects with the Czech participation. Named as a factsheet, it includes simultaneously Czech and English description of completed projects with substantial Czech participation. Every information sheet contains also main results achieved together with the profile of Czech organisations involved. Altogether 10 sheets were printed in amount of 500 pieces each and added to previous projects packed in a one compact file.

### **3.7. Information brochure Czech Space Activities**

The brochure summarises the major Czech space projects and capacities relevant to the recent years. The brief presentation of the country's activities is given in English on several pages. The content includes overview of main Czech achievements from space science and space awareness to microgravity research, launchers, space technology, space applications to education and outreach. In 2013, a brochure was updated and released in an edition of 500 pieces. Czech Space Activities brochure was distributed to international partners and among space community, especially on the occasion of the 64th International Astronautical Congress.

### **3.8. Czech Space Catalogue**

The updated version of the Czech Space Catalogue in English language has been published in 2013 in edition of 500 pieces. It contains 78 entries informing about 43 private companies, 19 university departments and 16 institutes of the Academy of Sciences. General contact information and brief description of business for every entity is presented in the catalogue, accompanied by the scope of projects it has accomplished and listing of products or services. Organisations that do not have practical experience with space project but are interested in future engagement in space are also included. The catalogue is highly regarded CSO product. It is appreciated valuable information source requested by foreign partners looking for suitable partners in the Czech Republic.

### **3.9. Student Newsletter**

The newsletter gives basic information on educational projects organised or supported by the CSO. Its target readers are students in primary and secondary schools. The CSO's Centre for Student Activities has published two issues in 2013 (spring and autumn). Along with a list of student programmes and activities available in next period of time, the newsletter brings stories about Czech students and teams taking part in international projects. Newsletters were added in prepared information packages for teachers and distributed at outreach events with CSO participation.

### **3.10. Info sheets on Copernicus programme**

To further increase understanding about objectives and benefits of the EU Copernicus programme, CSO has compiled information sheets focused on new set of services. Each of the two-page documents provides basic description of one service planned to be developed and put in operation. Specific topics include maritime business, climate change and security issues.

## 4. Education and outreach

Space acts as a beacon to attract a new generation of engineers, scientists and entrepreneurs into activities that are vital in generating the economic activity needed to drive sustainable growth of society. CSO continuously strives to ignite the spark of awareness and appreciation in young minds for Earth observation technology, satellite technology and space science and space operations. There are two directions in which CSO is working in this field: the one is to educate for space – addressing the need for skilled graduates and technicians in the space sector. The other is space for education – using the exciting context of space to inspire an interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

### 4.1. School supporting

The Czech Space Office is establishing itself as the main national source of teaching resources using the context of space to inspire students. CSO has worked with school teachers since its formation taking space outreach initiatives over every region of the country.

Teachers and students of primary, secondary and high schools have been regularly informed about education activities available in ESA, NASA, CSO and other organisations. Almost 700 subscribers received information email of the CSO Centre for Student Activities every month with an updated overview of student competitions, courses for teachers, student internships and sponsored conferences.

Supported by the European MAT (Materials for the New Millennium) project supporting education in science, more than 1 700 listeners including more than 200 teachers took part in courses and lectures given by CSO personnel during 2013. Moreover, about 80 schools subscribed to the CSO electronic Education bulletin and 5 new teaching resources were added to the CSO webpage dedicated to education.

The project partners acquired the necessary information also in the printed MAT newsletter, which had come out in number of 4 issues with thirteen articles by authors from the CSO.

During the year under review, CSO reached 1 500 learners and 100 teachers in three tens of primary and secondary schools through direct engagements to create an awareness of space science and technology.

## 4.2. Student actions

As part of building the future skills pipeline of science and technology researchers and scientists, CSO has helped 12 students to be trained in several international courses or schools. Thanks to that possibility students underwent a unique way to gain new knowledge in Earth observation techniques and applications, scientific research in space, data processing, space science and space operations.

CSO also individually consulted students mostly about administration and organisational conditions of participation in ESA contests (e.g. balloon and micro/hyper-gravity experiments, robotic and cansat competitions, etc.) and how to get internships in ESA centres.

For seven years the Czech Space Office has been co-organiser of the student knowledge competition named Expedition Mars. The competition run every year and is designated for teams of young people aged 10 to 17 years. After several rounds of elimination system the winning team gain a practical training at the Centre for young astronauts in the Belgian base in Transinne. Under auspices of the first Czechoslovak cosmonaut Vladimír Remek and the first Slovak astronaut Ivan Bella, twelve children from both Czech and Slovak Republic took part in space flight simulation during the final event.

## 4.3. Mission X

Mission X: Train Like an Astronaut is an international educational programme designed by NASA, supported by ESA and led in the Czech Republic by the Czech Space Office. It aims to inspire interest in science, nutrition and fitness in school students aged 8-12 years by using astronaut training as a context. This year was the third one when CSO managed the programme among 21 school teams equating to a total of 346 pupils nationwide. Children undertook a variety of physical exercises and learning lessons similar to those with which to prepare astronauts. The programme also grew internationally with a total of 22 countries now involved, up from 16 last year, providing more opportunities for Czech schools to network globally.

## 4.4. Outreach

The Czech Space Office is the National Coordinator of World Space Week for ten years. This UN event is held every October 4 to 10 towards creating awareness among the public about space. In order to create interest and awareness on space research, astronomy and related physics, 20 dedicated events took place over the Czech Republic attended by more than 1900 people. A national report 2013 was sent to the WSW international organisers.

In parallel to international actions the Czech Space Office was involved in a bunch of national events. Beside others, CSO was co-organiser of the biggest Central European meeting of space enthusiasts Kosmos-News Party 2013 with 114 participants from 4 countries.

## **5. International activities**

The Czech Space Office is pursuing opportunities for international collaboration with the aspiration to identify partnerships on research and development across mutually beneficial technologies.

CSO staff actively participated in three professional conferences or seminars presenting information about the state of Czech aerospace and involvement in space programs.

During the year, CSO also participated in various multinational projects and forums, including International Astronautical Congress, and in working bodies of the European Space Agency.

### **5.1. European meetings**

CSO staff attended meetings of five ESA committees and program boards, and EU GMES Advisory Group and the 7th FP Space committee.

CSO participated in a workshop organised by the European Commission as a consultation exercise with European space research community to obtain an input for shaping the future framework program Horizon 2020. Subsequently, CSO took part in two meetings of the expert group preparing the work plan 2014-2015 for programme Space.

The CSO director presented an invited contribution at the International Space Commerce Summit 2013, the first conference of its kind in Europe. The presentation discussed an issue of the access to space commercial activities within a small country having a rich space heritage. Besides a brief list of major contemporary Czech space projects the audience was captured by the announcement about cooperation agreement with XCOR Aerospace.

CSO representative also participated at meetings of ESA working group for future exploration of the Moon and Mars, the workshop on biological and astrobiological research in microgravity and workshop on the human spaceflight activities in low Earth orbit after 2020.

At the invitation of the European Space Agency, CSO director has attended official gathering in ESA centre in Darmstadt to follow the launch of a trio of satellites Swarm with Czech micro-accelerometers on board.

## 5.2. International organisations

CSO actively contributed to work of international organisations such as the International Astronautical Federation, the International Academy of Astronautics, the European Committee for Standardisation and to programs of the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Membership of CSO in the International Astronautical Federation is well established for many years. In recognition of its expertise and experience in the field, the Czech Space Office is represented on several IAF committees, namely the Earth Observation Technical Committee, the International Project/Programme Management Committee and the Knowledge Management Technical Committee. Next potential has been open for participation in two more IAF committees dealing with students' and young professionals' involvement in space projects, agencies and companies.

Director of the Czech Space Office has been elected IAF vice-president by the General Assembly of the Federation in October 2012. In his capacity of the vice-president for finance he chaired two meetings of the IAF Financial Committee in last year. At the same time, he attended two meetings of the IAF Bureau - managing body of the Federation. This appreciation of the Czech space developments and achievements came after Dr. Perek's IAF presidency 30 years ago.

CSO booth at IAC 2013 exhibition in Beijing presented both capacity and results of some Czech space institutes and companies. Visitors were particularly interested in the Czech scientific instruments and student projects. During the week, the CSO booth was attended by about three hundred Congress participants, mostly from Asian countries. Several dozens of new contacts have significantly widened possibilities for cooperation on student satellites and scientific instruments for satellites.

The Czech Space Office has established close cooperation with the Space Generation Advisory Council supported by the UN programme on space applications and the representative of CSO has been officially requested to become a National Point of Contact for Czech students and young professionals.

Results of the Czech research in microgravity conditions on the International Space Station and terrestrial experimental facilities were presented by the CSO representative at the United Nations/China Workshop on Human Space Technology in Beijing in September 2013. Recommendations to the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space were formulated at the working group for research in microgravity with CSO contributions.