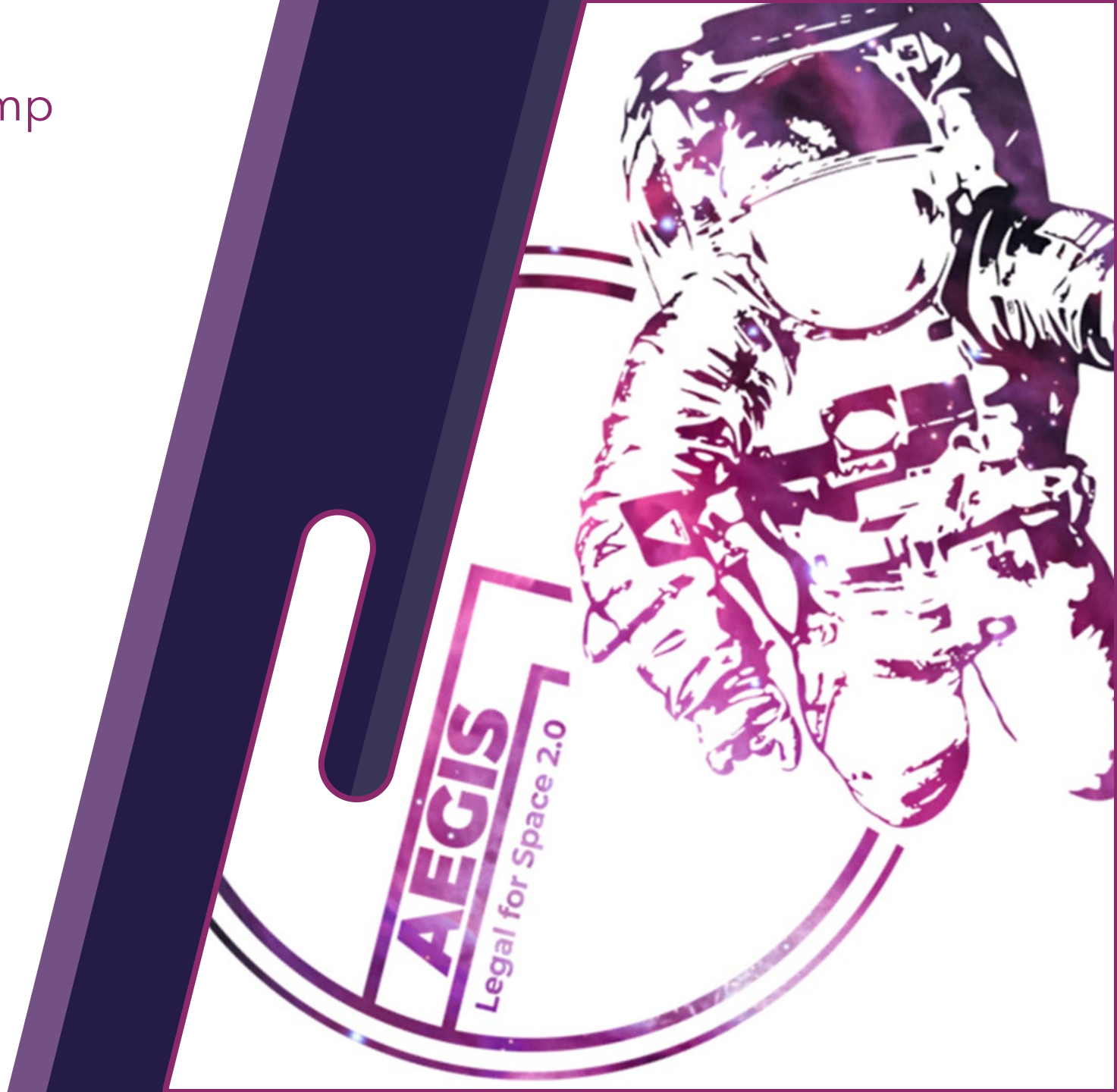


ACSP Space Regulatory Bootcamp

NOAA and Remote Sensing 101

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June 2025



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Agenda

1. Introduction
2. NOAA's Role in Commercial Remote Sensing
3. Who Needs a Remote Sensing License
4. Mission Assurance Exemption
5. The Licensing Process
6. Recent Updates & Trends
7. Key Takeaways

Introduction



Who is NOAA?

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- The Commercial Remote Sensing Regulatory Affairs (CRSRA) division regulates commercial remote sensing operations

What is Remote Sensing?

- Collection of data about Earth that can be processed to generate imagery of its surface features
- Imaging man-made objects in space is not considered remote sensing

Why is Licensing Required?

- Ensures national security
- Foreign policy compliance
- U.S. commercial competitiveness



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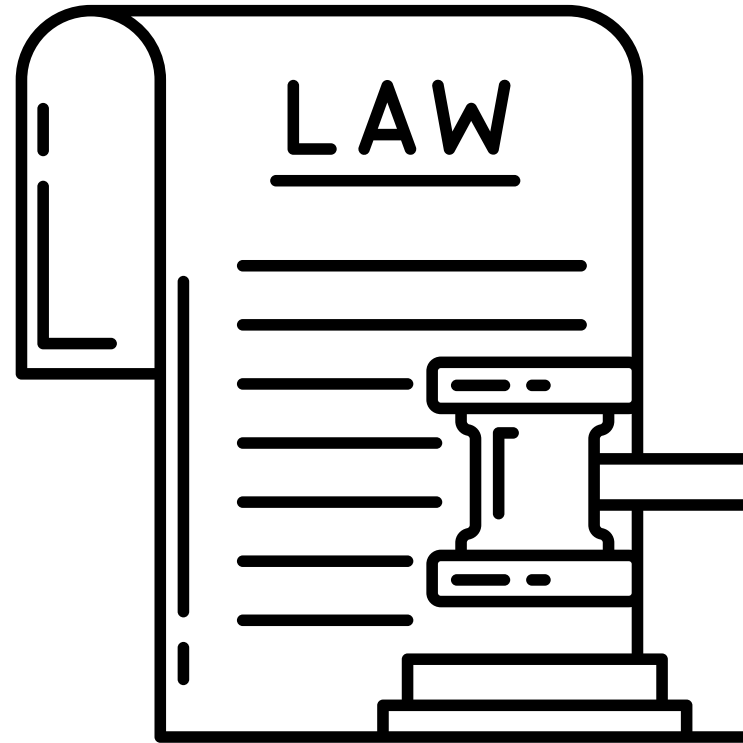
NOAA's Role in Commercial Remote Sensing

Legal Framework:

- Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992
- 51 U.S. § 60101 et seq.
 - National and Commercial Space Programs Act
 - Recodified the Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992
- 15 CFR Part 960
 - NOAA's Licensing Regulations

Interagency Coordination:

- Department of Defense (DoD)
- Department of State
- NASA & Other Agencies, as needed



Who Needs a Remote Sensing License?



U.S. Companies or Individuals



Foreign Entities

Are there any Exemptions?

Mission Assurance Exemption

Mission Assurance = Sensing Instruments that are NOT used for Earth Imaging

Exempt from NOAA's jurisdiction pursuant to 15 CFR 960.2(b)

- **Exempt Instruments**

- Star Trackers
- Sun Sensors & Horizon Sensors
- Cameras used only for deployment monitoring

Note: Exemption applies only if no discernible Earth imaging

- **What if a system has a mix of mission assurance instruments and remote sensing instruments?**

The Licensing Process

Prior to submitting a CRSRA Application, NOAA encourages



Initial Contact Form

adriane@aegis.law [Switch account](#)

* Indicates required question

Email *

Your email

Privacy Act Statement

Authority: The collection of this information is authorized under 5 U.S.C. § 301, Departmental regulations, which authorizes the operations of an executive agency, including the creation, custodianship, maintenance and distribution of records.

Purpose: NOAA collects this information in order to determine any applicable requirements for your remote sensing space system under the National and Commercial Space Programs Act of 2010 (51 U.S.C. § 60101, et seq.) and regulations, 15 CFR Part 960.

NOAA Routine Uses: NOAA will use this information to assess whether a full license application would be required for a proposed satellite system. Disclosure of this information is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. Section 552a) to be shared among CRSRA staff for work-related purposes. Disclosure of this information is also subject to all of the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice Commerce/NOAA-11 (<http://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/PrivacyAct/SORNs/noaa-11.html>). Contact Information for Members of the Public Requesting or Providing Information Related to NOAA's Mission.

Disclosure: Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide accurate information may delay or prevent the individual from obtaining a determination on applicable requirements under the law and regulations.

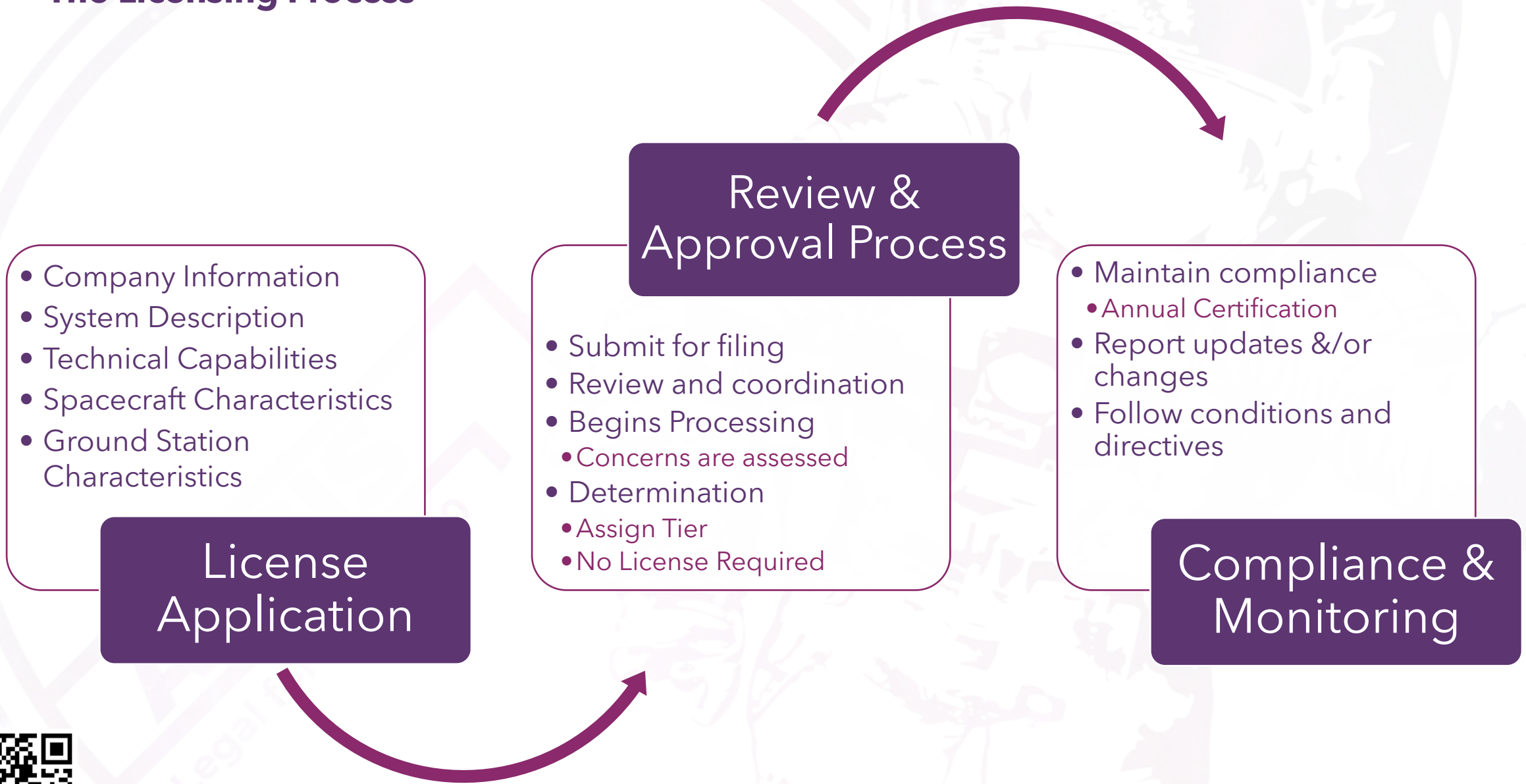
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CRSRA@noaa.gov or <https://space.commerce.gov/>

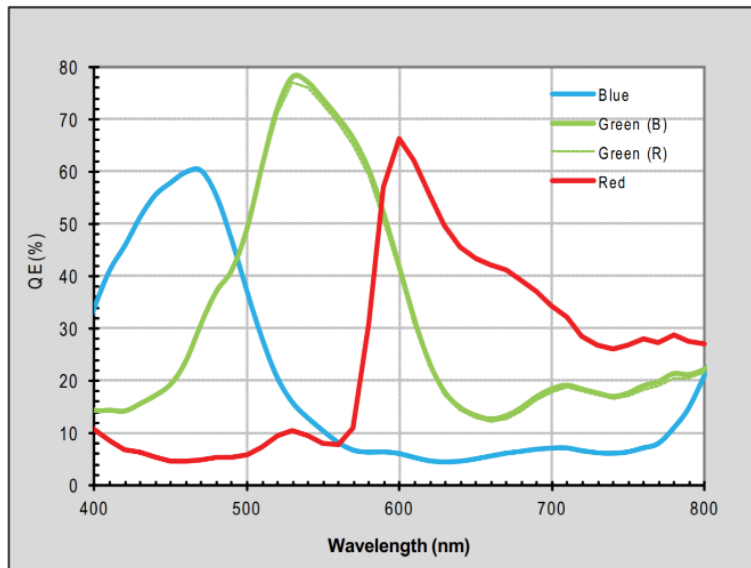


The Licensing Process

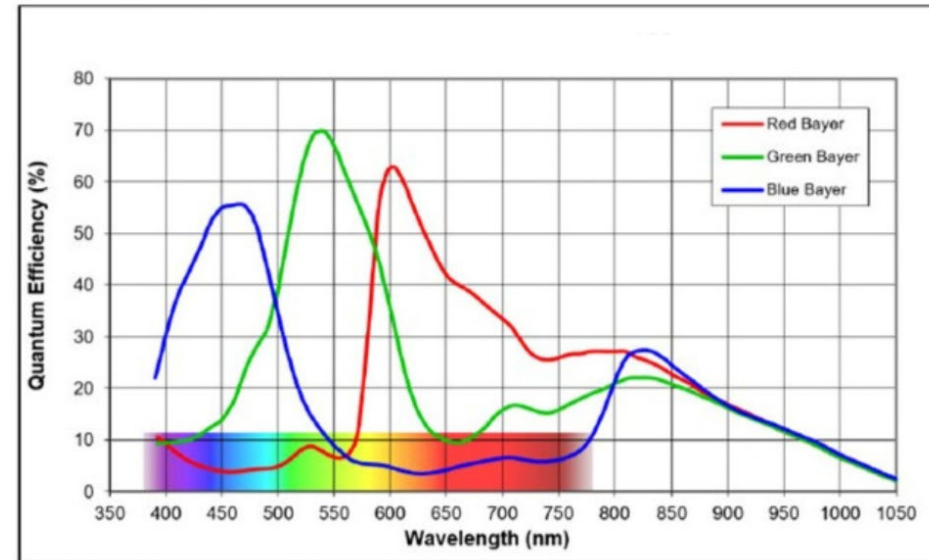


Lessons Learned

- Hosted Payloads
- Spectral Range



VS



- Artificial Resident Space Objects (ARSO)

Recent Trends & Regulatory Updates

2020 NOAA Regulatory Reforms

- Simplified licensing process
- Introduction of the three-tier system based on risk assessment

Emerging Trends

- Growth of small satellites
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration

International Considerations

- Growing competition from global companies
- Stricter compliance and data protection laws

Key Takeaways

- **NOAA regulates commercial remote sensing to protect U.S. security interests**
- **A remote sensing license is required for imaging Earth, unless exempt under mission assurance**
- **Compliance is ongoing - licensees must adhere to NOAA regulations**
- **Three-tier licensing system has streamlined the process, but still requires review**

Q & A





Thank You

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