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## UK opens space weather forecasting center

October 9, 2014

The United Kingdom (UK) opened its first space weather forecasting center, the Met Office Space Weather Operations Center, on October 9 in Exeter, England. The center will work in conjunction with its U.S. counterpart, the National Weather Service's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC), to improve global predictions of space weather impacts.

Space weather refers to magnetic fields, radiation, particles, and matter which have been ejected from the Sun that interact with the Earth's upper atmosphere and surrounding magnetic field. This interaction can lead to interruptions in satellite communications and global positioning systems (GPS), disruption of power grids, and damage to spacecraft. Cooperation between the two centers will allow scientists to gather more data and improve predictions for when space weather may cause disruptions and how to mitigate those issues.

Sources: Met Office, National Weather Service Space Weather Prediction Center, Nature

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