

# Public consultation on space weather - how should we prepare?

September 23 2014

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Space weather caused by solar activity can impact on power grids here on Earth.  
Credit: K. Turnbull / J. Wild / ESA

A [public consultation on space weather](#), an area of interest to many RAS Fellows, is currently under way.

Space weather is caused by natural processes which affect the conditions in nearby space and the Earth's upper atmosphere - including [solar flares](#), [coronal mass ejections](#) etc. Much like normal weather, [space weather](#) is usually changeable but harmless, however occasionally extreme events occur which may be highly disruptive.

Activities which can be affected by space weather include power grids, satellite operations, aircraft navigation, [radio communication systems](#) (including mobile phones), electric railways, GPS navigation etc.

The space weather public dialogue aims to find out what the public think about space weather and its possible impacts here on Earth. The RAS has been supporting this project, with staff and Fellows supplying expert advice on the issue and the approach to engaging the public. We encourage any interested parties to engage with the consultation.

The consultation aims to answer the following key questions:

What is the best way to communicate with people about space weather and its potential impacts?

- How might we prepare for such an event?
- Who does what if such an event happens?
- What do we prioritise?

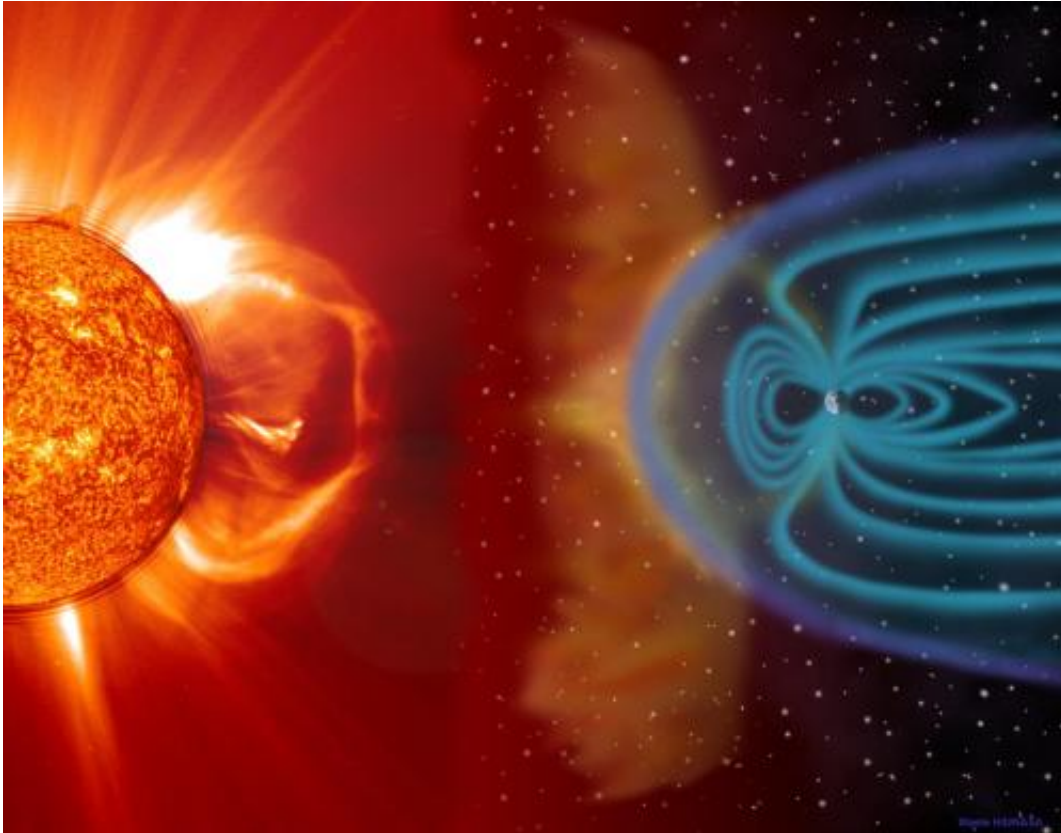


Illustration of how material ejected from the Sun (on the left) can interact with the magnetic field of the Earth (on the right), causing space weather. The blue lines surrounding the Earth represent its magnetic field. Credit: NASA.

Anyone who wishes to contribute can familiarise themselves with the background information, learn about the consultation, and take the survey to submit their evidence.

Provided by Royal Astronomical Society

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