SAIP2025



Contribution ID: 122

Type: Oral Presentation

Statistical Interpretation of the Thermospheric Density Responding to Geomagnetic Disturbances.

Wednesday 9 July 2025 11:10 (20 minutes)

Variations in thermospheric density play an essential role in satellite operations, particularly during geomagnetic disturbances, where fluctuations in atmospheric drag impact orbital stability. A significant incident on February 4, 2022, saw SpaceX lose 38 Starlink satellites due to unanticipated atmospheric drag following a geomagnetic storm. This study aims to identify high- risk periods in thermospheric density using observational data from ESA's Swarm Satellite C. By integrating key geomagnetic indices such as Kp, AE, and SYM-H, this research studies the geomagnetic activity with thermospheric density variations to assess space weather disturbances. The study uses statistical analysis to develop a predictive framework for identifying potentially hazardous periods, ensuring future satellite missions are better equipped to prevent similar risks. Data visualisation techniques, including plotted density fluctuations, provide deeper insights into the relationship between geomagnetic activity and atmospheric variability. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of thermospheric dynamics and their implications for satellite operations, mission planning, and the long-term sustainability of space activities.

Apply for student award at which level:

MSc

Consent on use of personal information: Abstract Submission

Yes, I ACCEPT

Primary author: Ms MSOMI, Sthandiwe (University of KwaZulu Natal)

Co-authors: Dr BILLETT, Daniel (University of Saskatchewan); Dr STEPHENSON, Judy (University of KwaZulu Natal)

Presenter: Ms MSOMI, Sthandiwe (University of KwaZulu Natal)

Session Classification: Astrophysics & Space Science

Track Classification: Track D2 - Space Science