

Dual success for Ariane 5

French Guiana

An Ariane 5 ECA rocket successfully launched two satellites into Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO) from the European spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana. The satellites were Eutelsat's Hot Bird 7A and Spainsat. Lift-off of the Ariane 5 launch vehicle took place on 11 March at 19.32 local time (22.32 GMT, 23.32 Paris time). The satellites were separated from the launch vehicle at 23.04 GMT and first telemetry reception was confirmed by the Malindi station in Kenya.

Hot Bird 7A

Eutelsat's new spacecraft will be transferred to the orbital position where it will go through a complete series of in-orbit tests before joining the HOT BIRD™ neighbourhood at 13 degrees East. These manoeuvres will be controlled by Eutelsat from its Rambouillet teleport, near Paris in collaboration with the satellite's prime contractor, Alcatel Alenia Space and Telespazio.

Giuliano Berretta, Eutelsat Communications Chief Executive Officer (CEO) said: "This launch marks a new landmark in the development of our HOT BIRD™ neighbourhood which generates more than 40 per cent of our revenues and accounts for over 80 per cent of our backlog. The first of a second generation of HOT BIRD™ satellites, replacing the first HOT BIRD™, which was launched in 1995, its arrival coincides with the near completion of the transition to digital at our prime video neighbourhood which already hosts Europe's first commercial High Definition Television (HDTV) channels. My particular thanks also go to our

industrial partners, Alcatel Alenia Space for completing this important satellite programme and to Arianespace for executing another faultless launch for our company."

Equipped with 38 Ku-band transponders HOT BIRD™ 7A's objective is to optimise capacity at Eutelsat's prime video neighbourhood which today broadcasts 850 television channels and 550 radio stations to more than 113 million homes in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, of which 40 per cent are equipped for satellite reception. The satellite will assume in April the video traffic broadcast by HOT BIRD™ 1 and increase to 102 from 100 the number of operational Ku-band transponders at 13 degrees East. Together with HOT BIRD™ 8, which will be launched in 2006, it will raise in-orbit security at Eutelsat's prime neighbourhood and enable Eutelsat to redeploy HOT BIRD™ 3 and 4 to other locations.

Spainsat

The Spainsat satellite was manufactured by Space Systems/Loral (SS/L), a subsidiary of Loral Space & Communications, for HISDESAT Servicios Estrategicos S.A. (HISDESAT) of Madrid.

"The completion and launch of SPAINSAT is the culmination of a successful partnership between SS/L, HISDESAT, XTAR and the Spanish aerospace industry," said Patrick DeWitt, President, SS/L. "Government demand for bandwidth has clearly increased in recent years

and with SPAINSAT, SS/L has leveraged its successful and reliable 1300 commercial satellite platform for use as a powerful communications system, able to provide robust government and military satellite services."

SPAINSAT carries a total of 13 wide-band, high-power X-band transponders. The satellite also carries a specially designed Ka-band payload uniquely tailored to provide services to the Spanish Ministry of Defense. SPAINSAT has a specified service life of 15 years and will maintain station-keeping and orbital stability by using bipropellant propulsion and momentum-bias control systems.

From its 30 degrees West longitude orbital location, SPAINSAT's coverage area encompasses a region extending from Denver in the US to the South American and African continents and across the Atlantic to the Middle East. It carries a number of steerable spot beams that can be positioned anywhere within the satellite's footprint. SPAINSAT is designed to be compatible with existing X-band terminals, including dishes under 2.4 meters. "SPAINSAT is the first satellite dedicated to Spain's ever-expanding need for satellite communications services," said Miguel Angel Primo, Chief Operating Officer (COO), HISDESAT. "With SPAINSAT, HISDESAT and its partner XTAR will be able to provide an expanded array of X-band services to the Spanish Ministry of Defense, the US and other allied countries. HISDESAT will also provide Spain with a dedicated Ka-band platform on SPAINSAT for developing new, enhanced communications capabilities." ■

Advantech AMT completes transfer

Canada

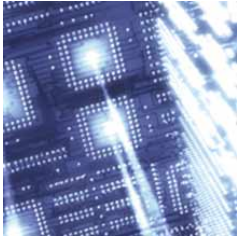
Advantech AMT has announced that it has completed the transfer of the Satellite Networks group from EMS Technologies Inc. in to the Advantech SatNet division. Financial details of the transaction were not disclosed.

David Geleman, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

of Advantech, said: "Since we first announced this transfer we have had a fantastic reaction from the market and a number of major contract wins. The recent policy announcement of the US DoD, mandating DVB-RCS, DVB-S2 and MIL-STD-188-165A standards compliance,

demonstrates that Advantech has squarely hit the target with our technology strategies".

Al Hansen, CEO of EMS Technologies, Inc, commented: "We believe that we have found a strong strategic buyer for our Satellite Network division in Advantech AMT." ■



Andrew to expand WildBlue earth station gateway network

US

Andrew Corporation has been selected by WildBlue Communications to expand the broadband satellite provider's network of gateway earth stations in North America.

Andrew will design and install two new Ka-band gateway earth stations at sites in Minnesota and Washington, and will add equipment to increase the capacity of WildBlue's existing network of gateway earth stations, which Andrew also developed and deployed in the US and Canada.

"We are proud to continue our support of WildBlue and its innovative, complex network requirements," said Jude Panetta, Group

President, Satellite Communications, Andrew Corporation. "WildBlue's network was one of the first Ka-band systems in the world and we feel our capabilities are unmatched in ensuring the high performance and quality it requires."

"Andrew's high level of support, and the excellent performance of our existing gateway network, made Andrew a natural choice for the second phase of this system," said Joe Ducey, Director of Gateway Earth Stations, WildBlue. "We look forward to Andrew helping us expand our capacity in North America."

Andrew's Satellite Communications Group provides a complete line of antennas from 43 centimetres to 11.5 meters for all enterprise, government, and consumer satellite communication applications.

Andrew-designed and -built products — which cover C, Ku, K, X, and the emerging Ka-band — include type approved earth station antenna hubs and gateways for broadband and broadcast, VSAT broadband antennas for consumer and enterprise customers, DBS antennas for home satellite broadcast systems, and complete installation and testing services. ■

Alcatel Alenia Space to build and deliver in-orbit Turksat 3A

Turkey/France

Alcatel Alenia Space has announced that it has signed a turnkey contract with Turkish operator Turksat AS, for the construction and the in-orbit delivery of a new powerful telecommunication satellite, Turksat 3A. Alcatel Alenia Space has been Turksat's sole satellite provider with five satellites awarded in more than 10 years.

The Turksat 3A satellite will enable Turksat to offer telecommunication services as well as direct TV broadcasting over Southern Europe, covering Turkey, Europe and Central Asia.

As prime contractor, Alcatel Alenia Space will be in charge of the satellite design, construction and test activities, all the way through in-orbit delivery, along with modernization of the ground segment. Alcatel Alenia Space will also provide training assistance to Turksat.

Based on Alcatel Alenia Space Spacebus 4000B2, Turksat 3A will be fitted with 24 Ku-band transponders and will offer beginning of life power of about 8kW. Positioned at 42 degrees East, Turksat 3A is due to start services at the begin-

ning of 2008, replacing Turksat 1C. Turksat 3A is the tenth Alcatel Alenia Space Spacebus 4000 satellite ordered, among which four have been successfully launched and delivered in orbit. ■

Land Launch contract

Middle East

Space International Services and Sea Launch Company have announced the award of a firm launch contract with Israel Aircraft Industries, Ltd., utilising the Land Launch system.

The Delivery-In-Orbit (DIO) agreement requires a Zenit-3SLB vehicle to launch the AMOS-3 communications satellite to geostationary orbit (GEO) from the Land Launch site at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, in the Fourth Quarter (Q4) of 2007. ■

Radyne receives US\$1.3m satellite modem order

Regional

Radyne Corporation has announced that its Radyne satellite electronics division received a new order of over US\$1.3 million for satellite modems and frequency converters from a major South Asian integrator.

The order is the third in a series that totals almost \$5 million from the same customer over the past year. The equipment is intended for use in the development of the country's largest landline and mobile telephone network. Radyne expects to ship the entire order during the First Quarter (Q1).

"We are always gratified at repeat business especially on such a large scale," said Bob Fitting, Radyne's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

"This customer's satisfaction with their previous orders reflects Radyne's superior service and flexible performance which is well suited for telephony backhaul." ■

Revenue from IPSTAR lifts Shin Satellite

Thailand

Shin Satellite Public Company Limited (SATTEL) reported sales and service revenue of Baht 5,589 million for 2005, from Baht 5,120 million in 2004. The Company's satellite business increased by 13.5 per cent year-on-year, due to an increase in IPSTAR service revenue doubling from Baht 502 million in 2004 to Baht 1,074 million in 2005. This was largely due to sales of the Company's IPSTAR user terminals reaching 17,992 units in 2005, compared with 5,476 in 2004. Net profit was Baht 1,208 million, an increase of 41.1 per cent over 2004.

The Company saw revenues from Cambodia and Laos rise

28.4 per cent, to Baht 2,001 million in 2005, from Baht 1,559 million in 2004. This was due to strong growth in subscribers from both companies. As of the end of 2005, Camshin had 209,425 subscribers, up from 147,830, or 29 per cent, in 2004. Lao Telecommunications (LTC) had 471,800 subscribers, up from 294,046, or 37 per cent, in 2004. The growth of subscribers in both companies can be attributed to their previous investment in network expansion and the popularity of prepaid services. Lao Telecommunications (LTC) announced, it would pay a dividend of US\$6 million for 2005, thus the Company will receive a

dividend of \$2.94 million for its 49 per cent share of that joint venture with the Lao Government. The Company's total shared net income from the Internet business was Baht 113 million, an increase of 1.3 per cent. In 2005, the Company's associate, CS LoxInfo, recognized 100 per cent of revenue from Teleinfo Media (TMC) for the first time. Revenue from TMC amounted to Baht 816 million, an increase of Baht 301 million, or 58 per cent, compared to 2004 which recognized only 63.25 per cent. CS LoxInfo saw an increase of broadband users, up 53 per cent over the previous year. CS LoxInfo Plc announced

a dividend for 2005 of Baht 0.45/share.

In February 2006, the Company was recognized as '2006 Industry Innovator for Technology Development and Application' by the Society of Satellite Professionals International (SSPI), for its IPSTAR technology. The Company was also one of the three finalists of the World Teleport Association's '2006 Corporate Teleport Operator of the Year Award'. The Company announced the Telephone Organization of Thailand Plc (TOT) as its IPSTAR National Service Operator in December 2005, TOT will be the sole supplier of IPSTAR capacity in Thailand. ■

Inmarsat numbers up

Global

Inmarsat plc has reported unaudited consolidated financial results for the year ended 31 December 2005. The highlights are:

- Mobile Satellite Services (MSS) revenue up 3 per cent to \$472.5 million (2004: \$458.9 million);
- Earnings Before Interests Tax and Depreciation (EBITDA) up 5 per cent to \$317.1 million (2004: \$301.7 million);
- Inmarsat-4 satellite deployment completed with two successful launches;
- Start of commercial Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) services in December 2005;
- Successful Initial Public Offering (IPO) and capital structure changes implemented; and
- Final dividend proposed of US\$10.95 cents per share.

Andrew Sukawaty, Inmarsat's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) said, "It was a strong finish to a transformational year. We are pleased with our solid financial performance and significant operational achievements in 2005. With the successful launch of two

Inmarsat-4 satellites we have added significant life and new capacity to our network and enabled the introduction of BGAN services, a global DSL-like offering. With these steps now behind us we are entering 2006 with confidence and believe strongly in the diverse growth opportunities for our business." ■

SWE-DISH chosen by MBC TV

SWE-DISH Satellite Systems has been chosen to supply mobile satellite communication equipment for live news coverage to the Arabic TV station, MBC TV. Effective March 2006, MBC TV station will start using SWE-DISH DA150K Drive-Away systems within its mobile fleet.

"The DA150K Drive-Away antenna is ideally designed for live news coverage. And the system's quick deployment and robustness fit MBC's requirements", says Lars Jehrlander, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) SWE-DISH Satellite Systems. ■

Patriot wins IPSTAR contract

Thailand/US

Patriot Antenna Systems has signed a definitive agreement with Shin Satellite Public Company Ltd. for the supply of 100,000 84cm Ku-band VSAT Terminals.

The Patriot 84cm terminals will be used for two-way Internet service supplied through Shin Satellites newly launched 'IPSTAR' broadband satellite. The Patriot terminals meet all of Shin Satellites requirements for two-way Internet service, which will be marketed for both commercial and residential customers throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

"We are proud to be a part of the development of the Asia-Pacific region," stated Paul Wagler, Director of Program Management for Patriot Antenna Systems. "Contributing such an important piece to the communications infrastructure is very exciting and also a great opportunity for Patriot. The potential for growth in India, Australia and Eastern Asian countries is staggering," he continued.

Patriot believes that the initial release by Shin Satellite for 100,000 Ku-band terminals is

just the tip of the iceberg, as demand for this service could reach the hundreds of thousands within the next few years. The IPSTAR satellite, with 45Gbit/s of capacity, is the largest commercial satellite in orbit and can serve up to 3 to 5 million users.

In separate news, Geodetic Systems, Inc. (GSI), a leading provider of portable 3D co-ordinate industrial measurement systems, has announced that Patriot Antenna Systems has finalised their acquisition of a V-STARS S/8 photogrammetry system and INCA3 digital photogrammetric camera. V-STARS photogrammetry solutions developed by Geodetic Systems are primarily used for in-place measurement of large objects in unstable industrial environments or outdoors settings, where conditions like vibration, movement, and extreme temperatures exist and pose problems for other metrology instruments. Patriot Antenna Systems will utilise V-STARS photogrammetry for their product quality assurance programme. ■

Sea Launch successfully delivers EchoStar X satellite to orbit

US

Sea Launch Company has successfully delivered the EchoStar X communications satellite to Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO). Early data indicate the spacecraft is in excellent condition.

A Zenit-3SL vehicle lifted off at 3:35PM PT (23:35GMT) on 15 February, from the Odyssey Launch Platform, positioned at 154 degrees West Longitude. All systems performed nominally throughout the flight. The Block DM-SL upper stage inserted the 4,333kg (9,553lb). EchoStar X satellite to GTO, on its way to a final orbital position of 110 degrees West Longitude. A ground station in Uralla, Australia, acquired the first signal from the satellite, as planned.

The EchoStar X satellite was built by Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems

(LMCSS) in Pennsylvania and then assembled in Sunnyvale, California. The high-power Ku band A2100-AX spacecraft is designed to deliver Direct-To-Home (DTH) broadcast services to DISH Network customers throughout the US. This direct broadcast system is optimised to provide additional bandwidth and, used in conjunction with other EchoStar satellites, EchoStar X will enable the DISH Network to expand its customer services and channel offerings.

Following acquisition of the spacecraft's signal, Jim Maser, President and General Manager (GM) of Sea Launch, congratulated EchoStar and Lockheed Martin. "This is our second mission with EchoStar and we are very happy to have achieved another mission suc-

cess for DISH Network with EchoStar X. We want to congratulate EchoStar in their twenty-fifth Anniversary Year and their tenth year of DISH Network, providing outstanding satellite Television (TV) service to households across the US. We are proud to be a part of these achievements and we look forward to future opportunities to contribute to your success.

"Congratulations also to Lockheed Martin and welcome to the Sea Launch family. This is the first of what we hope will be many launches with a Lockheed Martin spacecraft. I also want to thank the entire Sea Launch team for successfully executing another Sea Launch mission for yet another new spacecraft."

"We are pleased with the success of the launch mission and want to thank Sea Launch

and Lockheed Martin for their efforts for launching our satellite," said Rohan Zaveri, Vice President (VP) of Space Programs for EchoStar. "We look forward to testing and use of the satellite within the next few months."

EchoStar X now joins EchoStar's current fleet of nine satellites that provide DISH Network customers with hundreds of all-digital television channels, including interactive TV services, sports programming, High Definition Television (HDTV) and international programming.

EchoStar Communications Corporation, based in Englewood, Colorado, serves more than 12 million satellite TV customers through its DISH Network, the fastest growing US provider of advanced digital television services in the past five years. ■

Russia's RTR-Planeta joins AsiaSat 2

Regional

Asia Satellite Telecommunications Company Limited (AsiaSat) and Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (RTR) announced today that RTR's international television station RTR-Planeta has commenced broadcasting on AsiaSat 2, offering Russian speaking viewers in Asia and Australasia prime time news, sports, feature films, documentary movies and general cultural programming.

This Russian language channel joins the European Bouquet's digital platform on AsiaSat 2 for Free-To-Air (FTA) distribution across Asia. This platform includes some of the most popular European television channels such as RAI International of Italy, and TVE Internacional of Spain.

"Following our launch of RTR-Planeta to audience in Europe and the US, we are very excited that we have now expanded our services to Asia via

AsiaSat 2 that provides excellent access to numerous cable headends, terrestrial television stations, pay TV platform operators and hotels in Asia. With AsiaSat 2, our Russian speaking audience in Asia are able to stay connected to Russian culture through a wide selection of quality programming from our three leading national channels," said Olga Trofimova, Head of International Broadcasting of RTR.

"We are very pleased that RTR, the leading state owned broadcaster in Russia, has selected AsiaSat for expanding their service to Asia. RTR-Planeta is the first Russian language television service on AsiaSat 2 and we anticipate that a greater variety of programming will be added to our channel line up in the near future," said Peter Jackson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AsiaSat. ■

SkyWay Connect and PanAmSat work together to offer IPTV services

US

SkyWay Connect, Inc., an IP/ASI-based video distribution provider, has announced that it is working with PanAmSat to deliver IPTV services to small and mid-sized cable systems and telcos across North America based on the SkyWay Connect™ MPEG-4 AVC video distribution platform.

Under development, this service intends to rely on PanAmSat's Galaxy 3C satellite to transmit the MPEG-4 AVC video content. PanAmSat and SkyWay Connect will work together to support customer needs and actively participate in promotion of the offering. PanAmSat also retains an option to acquire an equity interest in SkyWay Connect.

Acting SkyWay Connect Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Gary Hatch said, "We believe that uniting our industry experience with PanAmSat's unmatched strength in the North American video market is a winning combination, clearly making us the leader in this important new field. Furthermore, we can help these service providers consistently increase revenue and greatly boost overall system value."

The alliance combines a long-term trusted satellite video carrier with a group steeped in technical know-how and market experience. Together, PanAmSat and SkyWay Connect will provide a video product that meets the content security requirements of the digital age. Such technologies as program fingerprinting, watermarking, digital rights management, open standard conditional access and electronic information structures assure programmer confidence and customer preference. ■