

Press Release

SPACE SYSTEMS

Airbus to build new generation broadcast satellites to renew Eutelsat HOTBIRD fleet

Two sophisticated telecommunications satellites based on Eurostar Neo platform

London/Toulouse, 19/11/2018 – Airbus has been selected by Eutelsat, one of the world's leading satellites operators, to build two HOTBIRD new generation telecommunication satellites that will replace the current spacecraft and enhance capacity at Eutelsat's premium broadcasting position 13° East.

The two satellites will deliver improved performances over the European and Middle-Eastern footprint, reinforced by a powerful European Superbeam.

They will ensure full service continuity over the operational 102 Ku-band transponders/frequencies, secure deployment and capacity redundancy at the HOTBIRD position. The HOTBIRD fleet forms one of the largest broadcasting systems in Europe, broadcasting 1,000 television channels to more than 135 million homes in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The new spacecraft will be based on the Eurostar Neo platform, Airbus' new geostationary telecommunications satellite standard design, a significant evolution of the highly reliable and successful Eurostar series with an entire range of major innovations. Eurostar Neo combines increased payload capacity and more efficient power and thermal control systems with reduced production time and optimized costs.

The satellites combine electric power of 22 kW with a launch mass of only 4,500 kg, thanks to the EOR (Electric Orbit Raising) version of the Eurostar Neo platform.

Due for launch in 2021, they will be the ninth and 10th high power all electric Eurostar satellites, harnessing multiple electric propulsion thrusters for faster orbit raising and on-station manoeuvres.

Nicolas Chamussy, Head of Space Systems at Airbus said: "The continuing confidence of Eutelsat in our products means that they are now the launch customer for Eurostar Neo which will be our new flagship telecommunications satellite. They have been our key partner for most of our firsts, including Eurostar E2000+ and Eurostar E3000, as well as electric orbit raising."

Eutelsat CEO Rodolphe Belmer said: "We are delighted to sign this contract with our long term partner Airbus. It marks another milestone in our objectives to provide customers with premium satellite technology with the highest level of performance, and to expand reliability and service security at the 13 degrees position, which has been our leading neighbourhood for over 20 years, serving Europe, the Middle East and North Africa."

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Nicolas Chamussy continued: “Eurostar Neo combines innovation with tried-and-tested technologies, resulting in a product line that will be as reliable as ever while delivering the best performance in the market. Eurostar Neo will be produced within the digital factory 4.0, a completely new way of manufacturing which will guarantee end-to-end data continuity up to the final in-orbit test results.”

The development of Airbus’ Eurostar Neo platform has been supported by the European Space Agency (ESA) and space agencies across Europe in the framework of the ARTES-14 programme line led by ESA and CNES, and strongly supported by the UK Space Agency.

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About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2017 it generated revenues of € 59 billion restated for IFRS 15 and employed a workforce of around 129,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners from 100 to more than 600 seats. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world’s leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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