

Airbus to provide satellite communications for Belgian Armed Forces

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Paris, 24 January 2023 – Airbus has signed a contract with the Belgian Ministry of Defence to provide tactical satellite communications services for a 15 year period. The Armed Forces will utilise channels of the Airbus UHF (Ultra High Frequency) military communications hosted payload on-board a commercial telecommunications satellite manufactured by Airbus.

“With this new UHF payload, Airbus will be able to offer a new UHF communications service, scheduled for launch in 2024, to the armed forces, particularly those of European countries and NATO allies” said Eric Even, head of Marketing and Sales, Connected Intelligence, at Airbus Defence and Space.

As the UHF frequency band is a relatively scarce orbital resource, this offering will make up for the capacity shortage around the world. Airbus has already signed several firm orders for this capacity, well ahead of the satellite’s scheduled launch.

The UHF payload will be operated from Airbus’s Network Operations Centre in Toulouse. Its 18 UHF channels will enable up to 200 simultaneous communications over Europe, the Middle East, Africa, large parts of Asia, as well as the Atlantic Ocean (to eastern Brazil) and the Indian Ocean (to western Australia).

Military UHF satcoms are used by the armed forces for operations on land, at sea and in the air. They have a high level of interoperability and are therefore very useful for multinational and coalition operations. The UHF band is very flexible and offers a lightweight, robust and highly secure means of communication. An extensive range of terminals for use on land, at sea and in the air is available to meet the needs of the various armed forces.

Airbus has unique experience in operating UHF miltatcom services. This new payload will enhance its portfolio throughout the lifespan of the satellite. Airbus is the only armed forces private satcom operator to cover the full spectrum of military (UHF, X, Ka Mil) and commercial (L, C/Ku, Ka) frequency bands and applications.

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**Newsroom****Contacts for the media****Bruno Daffix**

Airbus Defence and Space
+33 (0)6 48 09 96 50
bruno.b.daffix@airbus.com

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