

Airbus built EUTELSAT QUANTUM satellite shipped to launch site

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Toulouse, 30 June 2021 – The Airbus built EUTELSAT QUANTUM satellite has been shipped from the Airbus Defence and Space facilities in Toulouse to Kourou, French Guiana, ready for its launch at the end of July on an Ariane 5.

The EUTELSAT QUANTUM satellite is a revolutionary step forward for commercial satellites, offering very high customisation and flexibility. It will supply services with unprecedented in-orbit reconfigurability in coverage, frequency and power, allowing complete mission rehaul, at any orbital position.

Using a software-based design, EUTELSAT QUANTUM will be the first universal satellite to repeatedly adjust to business requirements. It will be located at 48° East, and will offer extensive coverage of the MENA Region (Middle East & North Africa) and beyond allowing it to cover any area requested by the customer anytime during its life in orbit.

François Gaullier, Head of Telecom Systems at Airbus, said: “The technology we have developed and built for EUTELSAT QUANTUM is truly game changing – paving the way to fully reconfigurable geo telecommunications satellites. Our experience in pioneering this revolutionary technology demonstrates the value of partnerships – bringing together the best from Eutelsat, ESA and Airbus to achieve a new standard in flexible connectivity.”

EUTELSAT QUANTUM has been developed under an ESA Partnership Project with Airbus and Eutelsat.

Two features of this partnership, which brings industry together around large-scale programmes to achieve leaps forward in the state-of-the-art, were the development of the unique payload designed and built by Airbus in the UK under the ESA programme of Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems (ARTES) and supported by the UK Space Agency, and the very innovative, multibeam active antenna payload ELSA+ (ELectronically Steerable Antenna+) developed by Airbus in Spain. This positions Airbus in Spain as one of the leaders in Europe for active antennas, and contributes to the next generation antennas for future programmes.

This ground breaking payload is embarked on the new geo satellite platform from Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (UK).

The satellite will provide communications on the move with dynamic beam shaping and vessel-tracking capabilities, optimised for power and throughput as required by maritime, aeronautical and land-based transportation. It will also enable bespoke design of wide-area data networks and dynamic traffic shaping, responding to demand where and when needed. In addition it will provide Government users with rapid response for public protection and disaster recovery as well as secure control using the latest encryption technology.

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The mass of the satellite at launch is 3.5 tonnes and its design lifetime is 15 years.



EUTELSAT QUANTUM in the Airbus cleanroom – Copyright Airbus



EUTELSAT QUANTUM being loaded in the container – Copyright ESA-Manuel Pedoussaut

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