

Astrix® Fiber Optic Gyro to fly on NASA JPL / CNES mission

- Airbus Defence and Space will supply its highest-precision Fiber Optic Gyro Unit for the NASA JPL/CNES/Canadian Space Agency/UK Space Agency Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) mission
- U.S. missions will carry all versions of the Fiber Optic Gyro Astrix® family

Airbus Defence and Space, the world's second largest space company, will supply its highest-precision Fiber Optic Gyro Unit (FOG) for a mission led by the American, French, Canadian, and United Kingdom Space agencies, NASA, CNES, CSA, and UKSA, that will launch in 2020 to study Earth's surface water.

Through a contract signed recently between Airbus Defence and Space and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the gyro will be integrated at the heart of the KaRIn (Ka-band Radar Interferometer) instrument.

"This is a new milestone in the Astrix® family success story. Future US missions will deploy versions of the Astrix® Series products - Astrix®120, Astrix®200 and Astrix®1090," said Jean-Pierre Domenget, Head of Space Equipment. "The Astrix®200 design uses the Fiber Optic Gyro technology that can be integrated into the heart of the Instrument without creating thermal or mechanical distortions. The high-precision Astrix®200 gyro will measure the roll parameters which will enhance the performance of the instrument that measures water surface height," Domenget added.

Airbus Defence and Space's Astrix® family of Fiber Optic Gyros supplies very high accuracy rotation rate data with extremely low noise, crucial for space systems stabilization, pointing, and attitude control. Developed in cooperation with iXSea, the state-of-the-art Astrix® products provide the highest performances on the market. Together with high-reliability, more than 15 years of continuous operation, low power consumption, low mass, quick start and versatile interfaces, they are ideally suited to any space application, from Earth observation to telecommunications satellites. The Astrix® products have already accumulated flight heritage of one million hour in orbit (as of end 2015) and have been selected by 10 customers worldwide. Airbus Defence and Space continues to develop innovative guidance, navigation and control solutions including the new Astrix®1090 NEO that will provide telecommunications level performance while significantly reducing a satellite's equipment cost.

The Surface Water and Ocean Topography (SWOT) mission aims to provide a better understanding of the world's oceans and terrestrial surface waters. U.S., French and Canadian oceanographers and hydrologists, together with international partners, have joined forces to develop this new space mission to carry out the first global survey of Earth's surface water, observe ocean surfaces in fine detail, and measure how bodies of water change over time.

About Airbus Defence and Space

Airbus Defence and Space, a division of Airbus Group, is Europe's number one defence and space enterprise and the second largest space business worldwide. Its activities include space, military aircraft and related systems and services. It employs more than 38,000 people and in 2015 generated revenues of over 13 billion Euros.

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