

Press Release

SPACE SYSTEMS

British ESA astronaut Tim Peake visits Airbus Portsmouth to see revolutionary Eutelsat Quantum satellite

Portsmouth, 26/02/2018 - Airbus's Portsmouth site played host to British ESA astronaut Tim Peake today to see the latest revolutionary telecommunications satellite being built at the factory.

The Eutelsat Quantum satellite, being manufactured by Airbus and Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL), is the world's first geostationary telecommunications satellite that will be fully reconfigurable in orbit. The satellite is being built under a public, private partnership between the European Space Agency (ESA), the satellite operator Eutelsat and Airbus.

The Eutelsat Quantum, due to be launched in 2019, will be able to adapt to new demands in coverage, bandwidth, power, frequency configurability and even change its orbital position.

Eutelsat Quantum will be the first generation of universal satellites able to serve any region of the world and adjust to new business without the user needing to procure and launch an entirely new satellite. Featuring phased array antennas and flexible connectivity, which is fully reconfigurable in orbit, Eutelsat Quantum will be able to adjust its coverage and capacity to suit customers' needs as and when they change.

It builds on the payload technology developed by Airbus in the UK under the ESA Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems programme (ARTES) and supported by the UK Space Agency.

As well as visiting the cleanroom to see the satellite, Tim Peake also spoke to apprentices and graduates at Airbus as well as meeting other employees.

Airbus' Colin Paynter, Head of Space in the UK, said: "It was great to welcome Tim to Portsmouth where we build world leading telecommunication payloads for satellites. Quantum is a truly disruptive technology with the ability to be fully flexible and reconfigurable at any stage in its lifetime in orbit."

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said: "We're working together with industry to grow the UK's share of the global space market, as part of the Government's Industrial Strategy. It was fantastic to visit Airbus alongside Tim Peake and meet the team behind this world-first satellite. The UK invests more than any other country in ESA's

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telecommunications research programme and the work going on in Portsmouth is a great example of the benefits this brings.”

Yohann Leroy, Deputy CEO and CTO at Eutelsat: “Eutelsat Quantum is the 24th satellite to be manufactured by Airbus for Eutelsat, building on a long-standing and innovative collaboration spanning more than 40 years between our two Groups. Combining flexibility and performance, the Eutelsat Quantum will bring a truly revolutionary shift to the commercial telecommunications satellite sector to meet the multiple and evolving needs of our customers.”

The Eutelsat Quantum satellite is primed and manufactured by Airbus in the UK and includes a new small geostationary satellite platform called GMPT from SSTL.

Notes for editors:

Tim Peake was joined on his visit by Graham Turnock, Head of the UK Space Agency, Yohann Leroy, Deputy CEO and CTO of Eutelsat, Magali Vaissiere, ESA’s Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications, Colin Paynter, Head of Airbus Space UK and Sarah Parker, Managing Director of SSTL.

About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2017 it generated revenues of € 67 billion 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.

Media contacts

Ralph Heinrich	+49 (0)171 30 49 751	ralph.heinrich@airbus.com
Jeremy Close	+44 (0)7766 536 572	jeremy.close@airbus.com
Guilhem Boltz	+33 (0)6 34 78 14 08	guilhem.g.boltz@airbus.com
Francisco Lechón	+34 630 196 993	francisco.lechon@airbus.com