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EADS Astrium to Acquire SSTL

EADS Astrium announced on April 7 that it had entered into an agreement with the **University of Surrey** to acquire its 80% stake in **Surrey Satellite Technology Limited** (SSTL) for an estimated £40-50 million. Based in the United Kingdom, SSTL specializes in the design and manufacture of small and micro satellites, including the **Giove-A** test satellite for Europe's forthcoming **Galileo** satellite navigation system. The transaction, which remains subject to regulatory approvals, will provide the financial and industrial resources required for SSTL's expansion and future development. It is expected that SSTL will remain an independent UK company.

BSAT-3b Contract Awards

On April 15, **Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems** announced its selection by Japanese satellite operator **Broadcasting Satellite System Corporation** (B-SAT) to build its next broadcast satellite, designated **BSAT-3b**. The spacecraft will be based on Lockheed's **A2100A** series bus and will be equipped with 12 130-watt Ku-band channels to provide direct-to-home services throughout Japan from the 110°EL orbital location. Pursuant to a contract announced on April 11, BSAT-3b will be launched by an **Arianespace 5 ECA** vehicle during the second half of 2010 from the **European Space Center** in Kourou, French Guiana.

Star One C2 and VINASAT-1 Launched

On April 18, **Arianespace** successfully orbited **Star One C2** for Brazilian operator **Star One** and **VINASAT-1** for **Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Corporation**. The launch service was performed from the **European Space Center** in Kourou, French Guiana on an **Ariane 5 ECA** vehicle. Star One-C2 was built by **Thales Alenia Space** based on its **3000B3** series bus, is equipped with 28 C-, 16 Ku- and 1 X-band transponders and weighed approximately 4,100 kg at launch. The spacecraft will be positioned at the 70°WL orbital location to provide a variety of broadcasting services across Brazil. VINASAT-1 was built by **Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems** based on its **A2100A** platform and is equipped with 12 Ku-band and 8 C-band transponders. The spacecraft will be positioned at the 132°EL orbital location to provide communications services to Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, India, Japan and Australia.

DISH Selects SS/L for EchoStar XV

On April 22, **Space Systems/Loral** (SS/L), announced a contract to build the **EchoStar XV** direct broadcast satellite for **DISH Network Corporation**. Scheduled for launch in 2010, the spacecraft will be based on SS/L's proven **1300** platform and is designed to support the expansion of DISH Network's programming and services.

Other April Launch Services

On April 14, **Lockheed Martin Commercial Launch Services** successfully launched the **ICO G1** satellite for **ICO Global Communications (Holdings) Ltd** from **Cape Canaveral Air Force Station** in Florida on an **Atlas V 421** vehicle. Built by **SS/L** based on its **1300** platform, ICO G1 weighed approximately 6,634 kg at launch, is equipped with a 12-meter S-band reflector capable of ground-based beam forming that, along with a complementary network of terrestrial repeaters, will provide between 10-15 channels of live television, enhanced navigation and emergency roadside assistance services across the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands from the 92.85°WL orbital location. On April 27, the **Giove-B** navigation satellite was orbited by **Starsem** from the **Baikonur Cosmodrome** in Kazakhstan on a Russian **Soyuz** vehicle. Built for the **European Space Agency** by a team consisting of **Astrium GmbH** and **Thales Alenia Space**, the spacecraft weighed approximately 500 kg at launch and is designed to validate critical technologies and secure priority for radio-frequency spectrum rights allocated for the **Galileo** European navigation system pursuant to the rules and regulations of the **International Telecommunication Union**. On April 28, **Land Launch** successfully deployed the **Amos-3** communications satellite for Israel-based operator **Space-Communication Ltd.** from the **Baikonur Cosmodrome** in Kazakhstan on a **Zenit-3SLB** vehicle. Built by **Israel Aerospace Industries**, the spacecraft is equipped with 24 Ku- and 3 Ka-band transponders, weighed approximately 1,270 kg at launch and has a design life of approximately 18 years. Amos-3 will be co-located with the **Amos-1** and **Amos-2** satellites at the 4°WL orbital location to provide a variety of broadcasting and communications services to Europe, the Middle East and the east coast of the United States.

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