

OneWeb Raises Additional Funding

On January 15, **OneWeb Communications Ltd.** (OneWeb) announced that it secured additional funding through equity investments in parent entity **OneWeb Holdings Limited** by **SoftBank Group** and **Hughes Network Systems, LLC** (through its parent company EchoStar Corporation), bringing its post-restructuring aggregate funding to \$1.4b. Earlier in the month, OneWeb sought U.S. **Federal Communications Commission** (FCC) permission to adjust the size of its proposed next-generation satellite constellation from 47,884 to 6,372 satellites under an application that it filed with the FCC in May 2020.

Bankruptcy Court Confirms Speedcast Reorganization

On January 25, **Speedcast International Limited**, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in April 2020, announced that the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas confirmed its plan of reorganization, paving the way for the company to emerge from bankruptcy by the end of Q1 2021 under the ownership of **Centerbridge Partners, L.P.** and its affiliates, subject to final regulatory approvals and closing conditions.

January M&A Activity

January 13 – Marlink Group announced that it entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 100% of the ownership interests of **ITC Global, Inc.** (ITC Global) from **Panasonic Avionics Corporation** (Panasonic). Panasonic originally purchased ITC Global roughly six years ago. The divestment by Panasonic signals its exit from the maritime, energy and enterprise satellite communications business in line with its long-term strategy to focus on the aviation market. The transaction is expected to close during Q1 2021.

January 14 – South Korea's largest defense company, **Hanwha Aerospace Co., Ltd.**, announced that it plans to invest approximately \$100m to acquire a 30% equity interest in South Korean satellite manufacturer **Satrec Initiative Co., Ltd.**

Eutelsat Secures €200m Loan for KONNECT VHTS

On January 13, **Eutelsat Communications S.A.** announced that it entered into a financing agreement with the **European Investment Bank** under which it will receive an eight-year term loan in the amount of €200m to fund the procurement and launch of the **KONNECT VHTS** satellite. Currently being manufactured by **Thales Alenia Space**, KONNECT VHTS will provide high-speed fixed broadband services to residential, enterprise and government users throughout Europe.

FCC C-Band Auction Sets Record in First Phase

On January 15, the U.S. **Federal Communications Commission** (FCC) announced that the first phase of its C-band spectrum auction raised \$80.9m, far greater than estimated and almost double the previous FCC auction record. The process will now proceed to the assignment phase, during which winning bidders will vie for frequency-specific licenses.

January Launch Services Performed

January 7 – Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) successfully launched the **Türksat 5A** satellite for **Türksat Uydu Haberleşme ve Kablo TV İşletme A.Ş.** on a **Falcon 9** launch vehicle. Manufactured by **Airbus Defence and Space** based on the **Eurostar E3000** platform, Türksat 5A will provide data services across MENA from the 31°E orbital slot. Following launch, SpaceX recovered the launch vehicle's first stage on its **Just Read the Instructions** dronship.

January 20 – SpaceX successfully launched another 60 **Starlink** satellites on a **Falcon 9** launch vehicle, bringing to more than 1,000 the total number of Starlink satellites orbited to date, and then recovered the launch vehicle's first stage – which set a new high mark for re-usability by flying for the eighth time – on its **Just Read the Instructions** dronship.

January 20 – Rocket Lab Ltd. successfully launched the **GMS-T** satellite manufactured by **OHB Group** on an **Electron** launch vehicle. While it did not disclose the customer, OHB Group described the satellite as an initial prototype for a planned multi-hundred LEO satellite constellation and confirmed that the launch was intended to satisfy **International Telecommunication Union** bring-into-use requirements.

January 24 – SpaceX successfully performed the **Transporter-1** mission, the first in its dedicated smallsat rideshare program, orbiting 143 satellites – including for Starlink, **Capella Space Corp.**, **Kepler Communications Inc.**, **Planet Labs, Inc.** and **Swarm Technologies, Inc.**, and for customers of **Spaceflight, Inc.** and **Exolaunch GmbH** – and setting a record for the most spacecraft ever deployed in a single mission.

Intelsat Selects Airbus for Two-Satellite Order

On January 8, **Intelsat S.A.** (Intelsat) announced that it selected **Airbus Defence and Space** to manufacture two satellites based on the **OneSat** platform to be used to support a variety of managed services and particularly future in-flight broadband services in light of Intelsat's recent acquisition of the commercial aviation business of **Gogo Inc.**

To learn about Milbank's Space Business Practice, or view previous issues of the Space Business Review, please visit www.milbank.com.

The information contained herein is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice on any subject matter. Recipients of this publication should not take or refrain from taking any action based upon content included herein. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please send an e-mail to MilbankSBG@milbank.com with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

© 2021 Milbank LLP