

Space Business Review

A monthly round-up of space industry developments for the information of our clients and friends.

September 2023

Contact | Dara A. Panahy, +1 202.835.7521, dpanahy@milbank.com | Bijan Ganji, +1 202.835.7543, bganji@milbank.com

September Investment Activity

August 30 – ReOrbit Oy, a Finland-based software-enabled satellite developer, announced that it raised \$7.4m in a seed funding round led by Inventure VC, with participation from 10x Founders, Icebreaker.vc, Expansion and Yes VC.

September 11 – UK-based space mission company Open Cosmos Ltd. announced that it raised \$50m in a Series B investment round led by ETF Partners, Trill Impact and A&G.

September 19 – Space traffic management solutions start-up Kayhan Space Corp. announced that it raised \$7m from Space Capital and EVE Atlas in a seed extension round.

September 26 – Sierra Space Corporation, a Colorado-based commercial space infrastructure and services company, announced that it raised \$290m in a Series B funding round led by MUFG Bank, Kanematsu and Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance that values the company at \$5.3b.

Thaicom Orders Software-Defined Satellite from Airbus

On September 11, Thaicom Public Company Limited (Thaicom) announced that it selected Airbus Defence and Space to manufacture the Thaicom-10 Ku-band geostationary communications satellite based on the OneSat software-defined satellite platform. Expected to be delivered in 2027, the satellite will provide coverage of the Asia-Pacific region from the 119.5°E orbital position. Thaicom previously announced that it entered into an agreement to lease half of the capacity on the satellite to Eutelsat Communications S.A.

Maxar Technologies Announces Reorganization

On September 20, Maxar Technologies Inc. announced that it reorganized into two separate businesses: Maxar Space Infrastructure, which will focus on satellite manufacturing, and Maxar Intelligence, which will carry forward the company's satellite imaging business. The restructuring follows the \$6.4b take-private acquisition of the company by Advent International, which closed in May 2023.

SWISSto12 Secures \$28m Credit Facility

On September 13, SWISSto12 S.A. announced that it obtained a \$28m working capital credit facility from investment bank UBS. The company, which has separately raised \$52m in venture capital funding, manufactures small geostationary satellites, drawing from its 3D-printing and additive manufacturing capabilities toward achieving greater cost, performance and production efficiencies.

Eutelsat and OneWeb Complete Merger

On September 28, Eutelsat Communications S.A. (Eutelsat) announced that it completed its all-share merger with OneWeb Communications Ltd. (OneWeb). Originally announced in July 2022, the transaction values OneWeb at \$3.4b and produces a multi-orbit satellite operator that will offer integrated geostationary and low-Earth orbit satellite-based connectivity services. OneWeb will operate as a subsidiary of Eutelsat based in London under the name Eutelsat OneWeb.

September Launch Missions

September 3, 8, 11, 15, 19, 23, 25, 29 – Space Exploration Technologies Corp. successfully launched batches of 21, 22, 21, 22, 22, 21 and 22 Starlink satellites, respectively, each time on a Falcon 9 launch vehicle.

September 19 – In a mission for Capella Space Corp., a Rocket Lab, Inc. Electron launch vehicle experienced an anomaly during stage separation, resulting in the loss of an Acadia synthetic aperture radar satellite.

September Launch Services Orders

August 30 – Globalstar, Inc. disclosed in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission that it selected Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) to launch in 2025 the first set of its satellites for the upgrade of its low-Earth orbit SPOT network, which will be used to support Apple Inc.'s emergency messaging service.

September 6 – L3Harris Technologies Inc. announced that it selected Firefly Aerospace Inc. to perform three dedicated launch missions for U.S. government national security programs using its Alpha launch vehicle. All three missions are expected to be performed in 2026.

September 11 – Telesat announced that it selected SpaceX to perform 14 launch missions using the Falcon 9 launch vehicle for full deployment of its planned Lightspeed low-Earth orbit satellite broadband constellation, with the first mission expected to be performed in the middle of 2026. Telesat announced last month that it selected MDA Ltd. to manufacture Lightspeed's 198 satellites under a \$1.6b contract.

September 12 – Arianespace S.A. announced that it was selected by Intelsat S.A. to launch the IS-45 satellite in 2026, along with unnamed co-passengers, on the Ariane 6 launch vehicle. IS-45 is currently being manufactured by SWISSto12 S.A. based on its HummingSat satellite platform.

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.

© 2023 Milbank LLP

