

Space Business Review

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

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CONTACTS:

Dara A. Panahy
202-835-7521
dpanahy@milbank.com

Bijan Ganji
202-835-7543
bganji@milbank.com

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ONEWEB AND AIRBUS FORM JV

On January 26, **OneWeb, Ltd.** (OneWeb) and **Airbus Defence and Space** announced the establishment of **OneWeb Satellites**, a 50-50 joint venture that will design and manufacture the 648 satellites that will comprise the OneWeb constellation. Including spares, the joint venture is expected to manufacture roughly 900 satellites for OneWeb, all at a facility in North America, except for the first 10, which will be designed and built in France; the joint venture will also be able to manufacture satellites, platforms and components for other customers. The OneWeb constellation will provide affordable broadband Internet access to users across the globe.

KYMETA CLOSES \$62M SERIES D FUNDING

On January 11, **Kymeta Corporation** (Kymeta), a Redmond, Washington-based startup developing innovative, smart antennas, announced that it closed a \$62m Series D financing. Existing Kymeta investors **Bill Gates**, **The Kresge Foundation** and venture capital firms **Lux Capital Management** and **Osage University Partners** led the investment round along with new undisclosed strategic partners. Kymeta plans to use the proceeds from the financing to fund further development of its flat-panel, lightweight and low-cost metamaterials-based antennas, with the aim to bring high-speed and high-bandwidth satellite connectivity to virtually anything that moves. In a related development, Kymeta and **Panasonic Avionics Corporation** (Panasonic) announced on January 6 an agreement whereby Panasonic will order Kymeta antennas and use Kymeta **mTenna™** technology to manufacture and market maritime terminals that, through Panasonic's HTS network, will enable high-speed connectivity for crew members and passengers of vessels worldwide.

USAF CERTIFIES UPGRADED FALCON 9

On January 25, the **U.S. Air Force** (USAF) certified the latest version of the **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** (SpaceX) **Falcon 9** launch vehicle, known as **Falcon 9 Upgrade**, for use in National Security Space (NSS) missions. Falcon 9 Upgrade features increased thrust, an improved stage separation system and a stretched upper stage that can hold more propellant. The USAF certified the earlier version of the Falcon 9 in May 2015 after a nearly two-year process. The only other launch services provider certified for NSS missions is **United Launch Alliance**.

JANUARY LAUNCH SERVICES

January 16 – **BELINTERSAT-1**, the first satellite of Belarus' new national operator **Belintersat**, was successfully launched on a **Long March-3B** launch vehicle. Belintersat plans to use the satellite for commercial purposes and for meeting the domestic needs of Belarus. Equipped with 20 C-band and 18 Ku-band transponders, **BELINTERSAT-1** will provide TV and radio broadcasting, broadband Internet and other telecommunications services to users in Europe, Africa and much of Asia from the 51.5°E orbital location. **China Great Wall Industry Corporation** manufactured **BELINTERSAT-1** based on the **DFH-4** satellite platform; **Thales Alenia Space** supplied the satellite's payload.

January 22 – **Blue Origin, LLC** successfully conducted the second orbital test launch and landing of its reusable, vertical takeoff and vertical landing **New Shepard** space vehicle, reaching a test altitude of 101.7km before both the capsule and booster of the vehicle returned to the launch pad for recovery and reuse. The **New Shepard**, which was first successfully tested in November 2015, is being developed to carry up to six astronauts to altitudes beyond 100km.

January 27 – **Arianespace S.A.** successfully launched the **Intelsat 29e** satellite, the first **Intelsat EPIC^{NG}** satellite, for **Intelsat S.A.** on an **Ariane 5** launch vehicle. Manufactured by **Boeing Defense, Space & Security**, **Intelsat 29e** carries the world's most advanced digital payload available commercially, with transponders in C-, Ku- and Ka-bands. **Intelsat 29e** will replace the **Intelsat 1R** satellite at the 310°E orbital location, from where it will provide networking, cellular backhaul and broadband services to enterprise, mobility and government customers throughout the Americas and across Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean aeronautical and maritime routes.

January 30 – **ILS International Launch Services Inc.** successfully launched the **EUTELSAT 9B** satellite on a **Proton** launch vehicle for **Eutelsat Communications S.A.** Manufactured by **Airbus Defence and Space** (Airbus) based on the **Eurostar E3000** platform, **EUTELSAT 9B** is equipped with 56 Ku-band transponders and will serve high-growth digital TV markets throughout Europe from the 9°E orbital location. **EUTELSAT 9B** also hosts the inaugural data relay payload for the **European Data Relay System** (EDRS) being implemented through a Public Private Partnership between Airbus and the **European Space Agency**.