

Space Business Review

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

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SpaceX Attracts Equity Investment from OTPP

On June 27, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP), Canada's largest single-profession pension plan, announced that it will make an investment of an undisclosed amount in Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX). According to press reports, in a filing made recently with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, SpaceX disclosed plans for a new funding round with the aim of raising \$314.2m, which would bring the company's total 2019 fundraising haul to \$1.33b. Analysts expect SpaceX to use the proceeds from the OTPP and other investments made as part of the new funding round to finance development of its planned 4,400-satellite Starlink low Earth orbit constellation, which will provide broadband Internet services worldwide, and its next-generation reusable launch system, which will feature an upper stage called Starship. SpaceX successfully launched the first 60 operational Starlink satellites on a Falcon 9 launch vehicle last month.

Canada Taps Honeywell for Quantum Encryption Satellite

On June 14, the Canadian Space Agency announced that it selected Honeywell International Inc. to manufacture and deliver the Quantum EncrYption and Science Satellite (QEYSSat), which will be used to establish a link between ground and space for the transmission of encryption keys.

Ursa and HawkEye 360 Announce Strategic Partnership

On June 4, Ursa Space Systems Inc. (Ursa) announced a strategic partnership with HawkEye 360, Inc. (HawkEye 360) for the development of new geospatial information solutions through the combination of Ursa's SAR capabilities and HawkEye 360's RF data and analytics.

Thales Plans to Establish Luxembourg Innovation Center

On June 18, Thales Alenia Space announced that it signed a letter of intent with the Ministry of the Economy of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to establish Thales Alenia Space in Luxembourg, a Digital Center of Excellence for the development of highly innovative digital solutions for space telecommunications and observation products.

Viasat & Arianespace Amend ViaSat-3 Launch Contract

On June 17, Arianespace S.A. announced that the contract for launch of the ViaSat-3 satellite for Viasat Inc. (Viasat) was modified such that ViaSat-3 is now slated for launch using the next-generation Ariane 64 launch vehicle, rather than the Ariane 5, making Viasat Ariane 64's first commercial customer.

June Launch Services Performed

June 12 – Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) successfully launched three RADARSAT Constellation Mission (RCM) Earth observation satellites under a contract with MDA Corporation (MDA), as prime contractor to the Canadian Space Agency, on a flight-proven Falcon 9 launch vehicle. Following stage separation, SpaceX successfully recovered the Falcon 9's first stage at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

June 20 – Arianespace S.A. successfully launched the EUTELSAT 7C satellite for Eutelsat S.A. and the T-16 satellite for AT&T Inc. on an Ariane 5 launch vehicle. EUTELSAT 7C was manufactured by Maxar Technologies Inc. and is equipped with 44 operational Ku-band transponders; it will be co-located with the EUTELSAT 7B satellite at the 7°E orbital position to provide broadcast services to users across Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. T-16 was manufactured by Airbus Defence and Space; it will provide broadcast services to users throughout the United States.

June 25 – China successfully launched a BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) satellite on a Long March-3B launch vehicle. The satellite is the 21st to be orbited as part of the third phase of BDS (BDS-3), which advances the system's coverage from regional to global, and the 46th for the BDS family overall.

June 25 – Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) successfully launched 24 satellites in a mission for the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) Space Test Program-2 (STP-2) on a flight-proven Falcon Heavy launch vehicle. Among the satellites deployed were science and technology demonstration payloads for the COSMIC-2 system developed by NOAA and Taiwan to collect GPS radio occultation data for weather forecasting and the Green Propellant Infusion Mission conducted by NASA for the testing of new non-toxic spacecraft fuel, as well as the Demonstration and Science Experiments satellite orbited by the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory to study space radiation. In addition to deploying these 24 satellites, the STP-2 mission served to demonstrate the performance capabilities of the Falcon Heavy, including reusability, to the DoD. After stage separation, SpaceX successfully recovered the Falcon Heavy's two side boosters at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

June 29 – Rocket Lab Inc. successfully launched the Global-3 Earth imaging satellite for BlackSky Global LLC and six other smaller satellites on an Electron launch vehicle as part of a mission for Spaceflight, Inc.

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