

## AST SpaceMobile Announces Committed Equity Facility

On May 6, **AST SpaceMobile, Inc.** (AST) announced that it entered into a common stock purchase agreement with **B. Riley Principal Capital, LLC** (B. Riley), establishing a Committed Equity Facility that gives AST the right to sell and issue, in its sole discretion, up to \$75m of its Class A Common Stock over a 24-month period to B. Riley, affording the company flexibility in the raising of additional equity capital. AST is developing a broadband constellation known as **BlueBird** as part of its plans to deploy the first ever space-based cellular broadband network designed to operate directly with standard, unmodified mobile devices.

## Astrocast Agrees to Acquire Hiber

On May 30, **Astrocast S.A.** (Astrocast), an Internet-of-Things (IoT) nanosatellite network operator based in Switzerland, announced that it entered into an agreement to acquire **Hiber B.V.** (Hiber), a Netherlands-based IoT-as-a-service start-up, in exchange for newly issued Astrocast shares representing 16.5% of the company's share capital. As part of the transaction, Hiber's shareholders agreed to invest €10.45m in Astrocast's upcoming public offering on the **Euronext Growth Paris** market.

## NASA & Boeing Complete Successful Starliner Flight Test

On May 25, the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration** (NASA) and **Boeing** successfully completed an uncrewed flight test of Boeing's **Starliner** spacecraft as part of NASA's Commercial Crew Program, achieving a new milestone in the qualification of the spacecraft for crew transportation services to the **International Space Station** (ISS). The test began on May 19 with launch of the spacecraft by **United Launch Alliance** on an **Atlas V** launch vehicle. During the test, Starliner demonstrated approach, rendezvous and docking with the ISS, followed by undocking, departure and precision landing in the New Mexico desert.

## Arabsat Selects Thales for New GEO Satellite

On April 29, **Arab Satellite Communications Organization** announced that it selected **Thales Alenia Space** to manufacture the **Arabsat-7A** geostationary satellite based on the software-defined **Space Inspire** satellite platform, which enables on-orbit reconfiguration of services based on shifts in customer needs. Arabsat-7A will provide broadband and video broadcasting services to users across the Middle East, Africa and Europe from the 30.5°E orbital position.

## May Launch Services Performed

**May 3 – Rocket Lab USA Inc.** successfully launched 34 satellites on its **Electron** launch vehicle from its launch complex in New Zealand and then captured the vehicle's first stage in mid-air using a helicopter, marking the first such recovery and a company milestone toward achievement of launch vehicle reusability. The mission included 24 **SpaceBEE** satellites for **Swarm Technologies, Inc.**, three prototype satellites for Greg Wyler's new start-up **E-Space**, as well as satellites for **Alba Orbital Ltd.**, **Astrix Aeronautics Ltd.**, **Aurora Propulsion Technologies** and **Unseenlabs SAS**.

**May 6, 13, 14, 18 – Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** (SpaceX) successfully launched four batches of 53 **Starlink** satellites, each time on a **Falcon 9** launch vehicle, in missions from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station and Vandenberg Space Force Base, and then recovered each launch vehicle's first stage on one of its droneships.

**May 20 – China** successfully launched three payloads – two low Earth orbit communications satellites developed by **Chang Guang Satellite Technology Co. Ltd.** and a technology demonstration satellite manufactured by the **China Association for Science and Technology** – on a **Chang Zheng 2C** launch vehicle from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center.

**May 25 – SpaceX** performed **Transporter-5**, the fifth mission for its dedicated smallsat rideshare program, orbiting 59 small spacecraft with a **Falcon 9** launch vehicle from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. The mission featured the **Momentum Inc.**'s **Vigoride** orbital transfer vehicle for its first demonstration flight, **Spaceflight Industries, Inc.**'s new **Sherpa-AC** on its debut mission, payloads from **HawkEye 360 Inc.**, **Umbra Lab Inc.** and **Fleet Space Technologies**, as well as 20 satellites integrated by **Exolaunch GmbH**, including for **Iceye Oy**, **Omnispace, LLC** and **Spire Global, Inc.**, among others.

## Satelloic Reserves Launch Capacity with SpaceX

On May 4, **Satelloic Inc.** (Satelloic) announced that it entered into a multi-launch agreement with **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** to reserve launch capacity for 68 additional satellites to be deployed for its high-resolution Earth observation constellation beginning in 2023. The company aims to image every square meter of the Earth's surface on a weekly basis by 2023. It currently operates 22 but has plans to have 200 satellites on-orbit by 2025. After closing its merger with a special purpose acquisition company in January, Satelloic began trading on the **Nasdaq** exchange.

To learn about Milbank's Space Business Practice, or view previous issues of the Space Business Review, please visit [www.milbank.com](http://www.milbank.com).

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