

Space Business Review

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

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HISPASAT AGREES TO INVEST IN LEOSAT

On July 10, **HISPASAT Group** (Hispasat) announced that it entered into an agreement with **LeoSat Enterprises, Inc.** (LeoSat) whereby Hispasat will make an equity investment in LeoSat. Hispasat will be joining **SKY Perfect JSAT Corporation** (JSAT) as a strategic investor. LeoSat is currently developing a constellation of low-Earth-orbit communications satellites with the aim of providing the first commercially available, business grade, very high-speed and secure global satellite-based data service. Financial details of the investment were not announced but, according to LeoSat, Hispasat and JSAT both purchased the same equity instrument and will have the same rights.

TELESAT SELECTS THALES AND MAXAR

On July 30, **Telesat Canada** (Telesat) announced that it selected **Thales Alenia Space** (Thales) and **Maxar Technologies Ltd.** (Maxar) for Telesat's System Design and Risk Management Project, under which Thales and **SSL**, a subsidiary of Maxar, will collaborate as a consortium to further develop and submit a proposed end-to-end system design for Telesat's planned low-Earth-orbit satellite constellation, including satellites, gateways, user terminals, operations centers and ground network. Currently expected to commence service in 2022, the constellation will consist of 117 satellites and will serve government and commercial customers globally, including air-, sea- and land-based users and users in rural and remote areas, with multiple terabits of secure, low-latency throughput competitive with fiber. Telesat expects to select a prime contractor for manufacture of the constellation's ground segment and space segment, as well as system integration, by mid-2019.

MDA ACQUIRES NEPTEC DESIGN

On July 16, **MDA**, a subsidiary of **Maxar Technologies Ltd.** (Maxar), announced that it acquired **Neptec Design Group Ltd.** (Neptec), a leading space sensors company in Canada and the United Kingdom, for CA\$42m, consisting of CA\$8m in cash and CA\$34m in Maxar common shares. Neptec focuses on electro-optical and electro-mechanical systems and high-performance intelligent light detection and ranging (LIDAR). MDA plans to integrate Neptec into the newly-formed MDA Commercial division and to leverage Neptec's capabilities to deliver end-to-end robotic systems and an expanded set of solutions.

JULY LAUNCH SERVICES

July 22 – **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** (SpaceX) successfully launched the **Telstar 19 VANTAGE** satellite for **Telesat Canada** on a **Falcon 9** launch vehicle and recovered the launch vehicle's first stage on the "Of Course I Still Love You" droneship in the Atlantic Ocean. Manufactured by **SSL** and equipped with spot beams in Ku- and Ka-bands, **Telstar 19 VANTAGE** will provide coverage of the Americas and the Atlantic from the 63°W orbital position to support bandwidth-intensive applications in the consumer, enterprise and mobility markets.

July 25 – SpaceX successfully launched another batch of 10 **Iridium NEXT** satellites for **Iridium Communications Inc.** on a **Falcon 9**, bringing to 65 the total number of Iridium NEXT satellites launched by SpaceX to date. Following stage separation, SpaceX successfully landed the **Falcon 9's** first stage on the "Just Read the Instructions" droneship in the Pacific Ocean but was not able to recover the payload fairings due to high wind shears. **Thales Alenia Space** and **Orbital ATK Inc.** are the manufacturers of the Iridium NEXT satellites, as prime contractor and subcontractor for production, respectively. A final batch of 10 satellites remains to be launched by SpaceX – later this year, per current expectations – to complete the 75-satellite Iridium NEXT constellation.

July 26 – **Arianespace S.A.** successfully launched four satellites – numbers 23, 24, 25 and 26, each manufactured by prime contractor **OHB System AG** – for Europe's **Galileo** navigation constellation on an **Ariane 5** launch vehicle.

July 26 – **Virgin Galactic, LLC** conducted the third powered test flight of its second **SpaceShipTwo** suborbital vehicle, known as **VSS Unity**, setting new speed and altitude records.

July 28 – China successfully launched two **Beidou** satellites – the 33rd and 34th of the 35 active satellites planned to complete the Beidou global navigation and positioning system by 2020 – on a **Long March 3B** launch vehicle.

July 30 – China successfully launched the **Gaofen-11** sub-meter resolution optical satellite on a **Long March 4B** launch vehicle, marking China's 22nd launch this year and equaling the country's record total set in 2016. Manufactured by **China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation** for the **China High-resolution Earth Observation System**, **Gaofen-11** will be used for agriculture, land surveys, road network design, urban planning and disaster relief.