

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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NOVEMBER FINANCING ROUND-UP

November 15 – **Rocket Lab Ltd.** (Rocket Lab) announced that it closed a \$140m Series E financing round led by **Future Fund**, with participation from other existing investors **Bessemer Venture Partners**, **Greenspring Associates**, **Khosla Ventures**, **Data Collective**, **Promus Ventures** and **KIWI**, as well as new investor **Accident Compensation Corporation**, bringing to \$288m its total funding raised to date. Rocket Lab plans to use the funding to scale up launch vehicle production, build launch sites and carry out three new R&D programs.

November 20 – **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** (SpaceX) secured a loan, the first-ever for the company, in the amount of \$250m, with a term of 7 years and an interest rate equal to 4.25% above LIBOR. **Bank of America** led the financing. SpaceX intends to use the loan proceeds for general corporate purposes.

FCC APPROVES NGSO SYSTEMS

On November 15, the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** of the United States granted **LeoSat Enterprises, Inc.** approval to deploy and operate 78 interconnected non-geostationary orbit (NGSO) communications satellites to provide the first commercially available, enterprise-grade, extremely high-speed and secure data service worldwide. The FCC also approved other planned NGSO constellations: **Starlink**, **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.**'s low-Earth orbit (LEO) system of up to 7,518 satellites; the 140-satellite system of **Kepler Communications, Inc.**; and the 117-satellite constellation of **Telesat Canada** (Telesat). In a related development, on November 27, Telesat announced that it was selected by the **Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)** of the **U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)** to investigate the potential uses of LEO satellite systems for the DoD's future space-based communications needs.

EUTELSAT TAPS AIRBUS FOR HOTBIRDS

On November 19, **Eutelsat Communications S.A.** announced that it selected **Airbus Defence and Space** to manufacture two next generation **HOTBIRD** satellites based on the **Eurostar Neo** satellite platform. Scheduled for launch in 2021, the new satellites will replace the three existing **HOTBIRD** satellites at the 13°E orbital slot to provide continuity, redundancy and improved performance for users of the **HOTBIRD** broadcasting system across Europe and MENA.

NOVEMBER LAUNCH SERVICES

November 1 & 19 – China successfully launched one **Beidou-3** satellite and two **Beidou-3** satellites respectively, each on a **Long March-3B** launch vehicle, for the **Beidou Navigation Satellite System**.

November 11 – **Rocket Lab Ltd.** successfully launched seven payloads on the **Electron** launch vehicle, marking the company's first commercial mission and second successful orbital launch and deployment of customer satellites. The seven payloads consisted of six satellites for **Spire Global, Inc.**, **Tyvak Nano-Satellite Systems, Inc.**, **Fleet Space Technologies Pty Ltd** and the **Irvine CubeSat STEM Program**, as well as drag sail technology demonstrator **NABEO**.

November 14 – The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** successfully launched the **GSAT-29** high-throughput satellite on a **GSLV Mark III** launch vehicle. The satellite will provide communication services to users in India.

November 15 – **Space Exploration Technologies Corp.** successfully launched the **Es'hail-2** satellite for **Qatar Satellite Company** (Es'hailSat) on a reusable **Falcon 9** launch vehicle and recovered the Falcon 9's first stage on the **Of Course I Still Love You** droneship in the Atlantic Ocean. Manufactured by **Mitsubishi Electric Corporation**, Es'hail-2 will provide Direct-to-Home television broadcast services to users across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as government communication services, from the 26°E orbital position.

November 20 – China successfully launched the **Shiyan-6** Earth observation satellite and four nanosatellites on a **Long March-2D** launch vehicle. Shiyan-6 will be used to conduct space environment exploration experiments.

November 20 – **Arianespace S.A.** (Arianespace) successfully launched the **MOHAMMED VI – B** Earth observation satellite for the **Kingdom of Morocco** on a **Vega** launch vehicle. Manufactured by **Thales Alenia Space**, as system prime contractor, and **Airbus Defence and Space**, as satellite prime contractor, **MOHAMMED VI – B** will be used for land surveying, disaster prevention and management, agricultural and environmental monitoring and border surveillance. It joins in orbit its twin satellite, **MOHAMMED VI – A**, launched by Arianespace last November.

November 29 – **ISRO** successfully launched the **Centauri I** nanosatellite for **Fleet Space Technologies Pty Ltd** on the **PSLV-C43** mission.