



## **Alphabus development contract signed**

- European platform for large communications satellites enters full development phase
- EADS Astrium and Alcatel Space will jointly offer Alphabus to the high power payload market

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EADS Astrium and Alcatel Space enter the full development of Alphabus, the new European platform for next generation communications satellites, following the signature of a contract with ESA and CNES. Under this contract, the agencies will support the industry for the Alphabus development programme and the production of a first flight model.

For several years, a joint team of the two leading European satellite companies has been working with the support of ESA (European Space Agency) and CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales of France) to define a product line able to efficiently address the upper segment of communications satellites. EADS Astrium and Alcatel Space have decided to federate their technical and financial resources on a common development programme, taking into account the amount of new technologies and facilities. Alphabus is then the vector for Europe to develop new reliable solutions for large satellites and offer them on the world market.

The Alphabus platform is designed for communications satellites with payload power in the range 12-18 kW of power. This will support the renewal of the fleet for large operators, offering a lower cost per transponder and the ability to accommodate reconfigurable missions, as well as the development of applications such new generation mobile and broadband services, digital audio broadcast and HDTV. Satellites based on Alphabus will have a launch mass in the range 6 to 8 tonnes, and take full benefit of the capabilities of the new generation of 5 meter fairing commercial launchers. In order to cover the mission range in an optimised way, the platform product line includes several options such as electric propulsion, and features scalable resources (solar array, radiators for thermal dissipation, etc.). The platform will be able to accommodate up to 190 high power transponders and large antenna farms, and will have a significant growth potential.

Alphabus is jointly developed by EADS Astrium and Alcatel Space according to a longstanding industrial sharing. Responsibilities of EADS include: Electrical power, Solar array, Chemical propulsion, as well as the Assembly, Integration and Test of the spacecraft. Alcatel Space is in charge of the Mechanical and Thermal subsystems, Avionics, as well as Electrical propulsion.



EADS Astrium and Alcatel Space will market the Alphasat for commercial communications satellites. Following the completion of the development, Alphasat will be offered from 2007 onwards on the worldwide market.

The use of the ESA Alphasat protoflight model for the Alphasat mission is currently under definition.

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