



EUROPEAN SATELLITE OPERATORS MEET TO DISCUSS INDUSTRY ISSUES

ESOA holds Board of Directors meeting and General Assembly

Paris, October 13, 2003

Key executives of Europe's satellite operators met on October 3 during the SatExpo exhibition in Montecchio Maggiore, Italy, for the European Satellite Operators Association (ESOA) Board of Directors meeting and its General Assembly. Both meetings were led by ESOA's chairman Giuliano Berretta, who is also Chairman of the Management Board and CEO of Eutelsat.

An important objective was to strengthen common views of the satellite industry on the deployment of broadband services in advance of the adoption in November this year by the European Council of the White Paper on Future European Space Policy. ESOA will shortly start discussions with the European Commission on the implementation of the Broadband SatCom Initiative for which the Association has contributed a joint proposal with Eurospace, the Association of European space equipment manufacturers that brings together Europe's leading satellite manufacturers (Alcatel Space, EADS-Astrium, Alenia Spazio).

Two-way satellite broadband

ESOA held a working session with major two-way satellite terminal manufacturers, including Alcatel Space, EMS, Gilat, Hughes Network Systems, Newtec, Pentamedia, Telesystem, Thrane & Thrane and Viasat to discuss joint activities that will facilitate the increased development of cost-effective broadband satellite services for end-users. The Association also decided to initiate a meeting in Paris in December with two-way broadband service providers.

ESOA members also discussed major issues that may impact the satellite industry including:

- Spectrum charges – ESOA is concerned by national initiatives to increase the burden of regulation in satellite downlink frequency bands which could impact on the deployment of new services and broadband in Europe.
- Market access issues – ESOA's strategy for encouraging a non-preferential, non-discriminatory “open skies” market access policy for satellite services, promoting and encouraging market entry by as many satellite service providers as technically feasible without discrimination on satellite technology used.

Speaking about the meeting, Giuliano Berretta, ESOA Chairman and Eutelsat CEO, said: “ESOA members are convinced that close cooperation and exchange between terminal manufacturers and service providers is essential for the successful deployment of broadband services throughout Europe. By creating a common platform we can initiate an active and positive dialogue on broadband with the European Commission in advance of the completion of the White Paper on Future Space Policy.”

New members

At the meetings, ESOA also welcomed its 11th full member, Greek satellite operator, Hellasat and its second supporting member, Alcatel Space, from France. Membership to the organisation is limited to satellite operators who have headquarters within the European Union. However ESOA agreed to invite selected operators from eastern Europe as observers such as the RSCC (Russian Satellite Services Company) and Gascom (a subsidiary of Gazprom), from Russia.

Executive Committee Appointments

ESOA made the following appointments to its Executive Committee:

- Christine Leurquin, Senior Manager, European Programmes at SES-Global was appointed as Chairperson of the ESOA Executive Committee.
- Ann Vandenbroucke, Manager of International Regulatory Affairs at Inmarsat was elected as Vice Chairperson.

- Tryggve Zetterqvist, Head of Human Resources and IT Systems from Nordic Systems AB (NSAB) was appointed as Treasurer.

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