

Satellite Industry response to global pandemic

30 March 2020

As the unprecedented global emergency unfolds, the satellite industry is acutely aware of its responsibility in providing services to customers to ensure business continuity and also to enable and enhance connectivity wherever possible to slow the expansion of COVID-19. As such satellite operators have made capacity and solutions available to countries to deploy or strengthen critical or emergency networks and to bring connectivity where it may be necessary.

Satellite Operators in all segments, including geostationary or low-orbit systems, contribute to improving lives and preserving the health and well-being of all. With robust and well-tested business continuity plans, both for the ground segment and in-flight satellites, they support uninterrupted operations during disasters. In addition to standard disaster recovery strategies already implemented, in the specific case of COVID-19, satellite operators are applying security and safety rules so that operations team personnel can continue in their positions 24/7, guaranteeing the provision of satellite capacity, airtime, and managed services to all customers, in different regions, countries, markets, and applications. Other satellite operator staff maintain their work activities remotely respecting health advice and limited mobility rules.

In these exceptional days where millions are quarantined but rely on up-to-date information from authorities and updates from other parts of the world, satellite telecommunications are more than ever a key element in keeping communities together, informed and protected from isolation.

ESOA Members at work:

Viasat to Participate in FCC's 'Keep Americans Connected' Initiative; Pledges to Keep Customers and Small Businesses Connected During Coronavirus Outbreak

In alignment with the FCC's request to all Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Viasat has pledged to: (1) not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; (2) waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and (3) open its Wi-Fi hotspots, in conjunction with partners, to any American who needs them during a period of 60 days.

More info: <http://investors.viasat.com/news-releases/news-release-details/viasat-participate-fccs-keep-americans-connected-initiative>

ECHOSTAR signs the FCC's 'Keep Americans Connected' Initiative and prioritizes educational and business collaboration applications.

EchoStar's affiliate Hughes has found that with so many people using the internet at home, HughesNet user traffic has increased dramatically in the U.S. Hughes is continually working to adjust the network to accommodate this extraordinary situation and help keep their customers connected. For example, Hughes prioritized educational and business collaboration applications and signed the FCC's Keeping Americans Connected pledge.

Azercosmos Has Joined an Initiative to Donate to the Coronavirus Response Fund

Azercosmos - the national satellite operator of Azerbaijan has joined an initiative to donate to the Coronavirus Response Fund that was established in accordance with the Decree of President Ilham Aliyev.

More info: <https://azercosmos.az/media-news/228?lang=en>

Inmarsat Connecting crew during COVID-19

As elsewhere, anxiety levels at sea have been on the rise with the spread of COVID-19. In February, Inmarsat enabled free of charge additional call time for users of their [ChatCard](#) voice services for crew. All ship managers offering the service were made aware of the offer, and groups such as the Singapore Shipowners Association also helped spread the word.

Inmarsat also provides medical advice and assistance free of charge to seafarers over [Fleet One](#), FleetBroadband and F77 services - anywhere, anytime and for anybody in need. They have prioritised telemedicine as an area for service development with their application partners, at no cost to owners or the crew.

More info: <https://www.inmarsat.com/blog/connecting-crew-during-covid-19/>

Türksat enables Remote Learning so Turkey can stay home

In order for 'Turkey to stay home' Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Cahit Turhan noted that elementary, secondary and high school education will be provided remotely by the Ministry of Education through EBA TV starting March 23. Minister Turhan underlined the fact that this service is being offered through Türksat and its 4A satellite on 2 different frequencies and 6 different channels, with three channels each being broadcasted in HD and SD resolution.

More info: <https://www.turksat.com.tr/en/haberler/turhan-services-are-being-offered-online-order-turkey-stay-home>

SES in Space Connects Us: Luxembourg Sends Global Support Message from Astronauts in Coronavirus Crisis

Luxembourg's space, communications and broadcasting industry, including SES, have joined forces to create the #SpaceConnectsUs, a virtual town hall meeting with astronauts, scientists and celebrities to talk about life in confinement and isolation, sending a message of hope, trust in science and mutual encouragement for everyone currently faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis. [Broadcasting Center Europe](#) and [ENEX](#), both part of the RTL Group, will support the production of the streaming before handing it to SES which will broadcast it live in High Definition (HD) via an ASTRA satellite across Europe. The development of the digital content of the program is supported by [FilmsUnited](#) and the international communication campaign by [wavel communications](#).

More info: <https://www.ses.com/press-release/space-connects-us-luxembourg-sends-global-support-message-astronauts-coronavirus>

More information:

Natalia Vicente, Head of Public Affairs - nvicente@esoa.net