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EUTELSAT COMMISSIONS NEW W3C SATELLITE FROM THALES ALENIA SPACE

Paris, 12 March 2009

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL), one of the world's leading satellite operators, today announced that Thales Alenia Space has been commissioned to build the W3C satellite. Eutelsat will select the launcher for the satellite separately at a later stage.

The rapid order of W3C follows Eutelsat's decision taken in January 2009 not to integrate the W2M satellite into its fleet following a major anomaly which occurred during its transfer from the location used for in-orbit tests to its operating position at 16 degrees East where its mission was to replace well in advance Eutelsat's W2 satellite. As a result of this incident, Eutelsat decided that the W3B satellite, which is already one year into construction, will replace W2 from the middle of 2010, raising available capacity at 16 degrees East to 56 transponders from 27.

W3B had the dual mission of accompanying the expansion and in-orbit redundancy of Eutelsat's 7 degrees East position and to ensuring a solution for continuity of service in the event of the loss of W2M, W2A or W7. The W3C satellite will now assume this double mission of boosting by more than 50% available capacity at 7 degrees East, or ensuring if required Ku-band continuity of service for future satellites, namely W2A, W7 or W3B.

Scheduled for launch in third quarter 2011 and equipped with 56 transponders, W3C will be based on the Spacebus 4000 platform of Thales Alenia Space. Its copositioning with Eutelsat's W3A satellite will expand capacity at 7 degrees East from 44 to 70 transponders. The copositioning of both satellites underscores Eutelsat's objective to transform 7 degrees East into a flagship position, repeating the multi-satellite strategy pursued at 13 degrees East which has enabled the HOT BIRD™ satellites to develop into the leading neighbourhood worldwide for the number of channels broadcast. With optimised coverage of Europe, Africa, the Middle East and central Asia, the W3A satellite at 7 degrees East already broadcasts close to 200 television channels and carries professional video and data services. The additional resources will enable Eutelsat to support expanding business of existing customers, notably broadcasters now launching their first HDTV channels. It will also bring fresh capacity to boost Eutelsat's resources in other regions.

W3C will have three key coverage zones to address markets with strong growth potential:

- High-power Ku-band coverage of Europe with a beam centred over central Europe and Turkey which is particularly optimised for Direct-to-Home (DTH) reception in these regions,
- Extensive coverage across Extended Europe, and including North Africa and the Middle East as far as central Asia, via a Ku-band beam optimised for professional video links and data networks,
- Ku-band coverage of Sub-Saharan Africa and Indian Ocean islands for regional telecommunications and Internet services. Interconnection with Europe will also be possible with the African coverage through a combination of Ka-band frequencies in Europe and Ku-band frequencies in Africa.

The investment in the new satellite is included in the capital expenditure programme for the 2008-2011 period of €450 million on average per year.

With a scheduled in-orbit life of more than 15 years W3C is the 19th satellite commissioned by Eutelsat from Thales Alenia Space.

Key data for W3C

Platform: Thales Alenia Space Spacebus 4000

Height:	5.8 m
Length:	2.0 m
Width:	2.2 m
Width with solar panels deployed:	34 m
Mass at launch:	5.4 tonnes
Power at end-of-life:	12 kW
Operational life:	15 years +

About Eutelsat Communications

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is the holding company of Eutelsat S.A.. With capacity commercialised on 26 satellites that provide coverage over the entire European continent, as well as the Middle East, Africa, India and significant parts of Asia and the Americas, Eutelsat is one of the world's three leading satellite operators in terms of revenues. At 30 September 2008, Eutelsat's satellites were broadcasting more than 3,180 television channels and 1,100 radio stations. Almost 1,100 channels broadcast via its HOT BIRD™ video neighbourhood at 13 degrees East which serves over 120 million cable and satellite homes in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. The Group's satellites also serve a wide range of fixed and mobile telecommunications services, TV contribution markets, corporate networks, and broadband markets for Internet Service Providers and for transport, maritime and in-flight markets. Eutelsat's broadband subsidiary, Skylogic, markets and operates services through its teleport in Italy that serves enterprises, local communities, government agencies and aid organisations in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. Headquartered in Paris, Eutelsat and its subsidiaries employ 538 commercial, technical and operational experts from 27 countries.

www.eutelsat.com

For further information

Press

Vanessa O'Connor	Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88	voconnor@eutelsat.fr
Frédérique Gautier	Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88	fgautier@eutelsat.fr

Investors

Gilles Janvier	Tel: +33 1 53 98 35 30	investors@eutelsat-communications.com
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