



PR/21/09

**EUTELSAT ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH IN JUNE ON ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3 OF FRANCE'S FREE DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TV (DTT) CHANNELS FOR HOMES BEYOND TERRESTRIAL RECEPTION**

*The launch of FRANSAT™ will enable the 1.5 million French homes receiving analogue TV via ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3 to switch to digital with no change to their dish.*

Paris, 8 April 2009

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL), Europe's leading satellite operator announces the upcoming launch of France's free Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) channels via its ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3 satellite. The new offer, called FRANSAT™, will be available from June.

Eutelsat's 5° West neighbourhood, which is occupied by ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3, has operated as a complement to France's terrestrial broadcasting network for more than 20 years by delivering channels direct by satellite to homes located beyond terrestrial reception. The transition to digital of this key French neighbourhood in the analogue world is a logical step. It reflects the 'Digital France 2012 Plan' and the new broadcasting law of 5 March 2009, which aim to offer a solution to homes in areas with poor terrestrial reception to access DTT channels without incurring the extra cost of adjusting their existing dish installation. France's free analogue channels will remain available via ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3.

The majority of France's 18 free-to-air DTT channels are already transmitting from Eutelsat's ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3 satellite. Assembled by Eutelsat in the FRANSAT™ platform, the 18 channels will be available from June with no subscription fee to all homes equipped with a dish pointed towards ATLANTIC BIRD™ 3 and a FRANSAT™ kit comprising a digital decoder and access card.

In addition to the 18 Standard Definition DTT channels, FRANSAT™ will enable reception of the four free DTT channels broadcast in HDTV: TF1 HD, France 2 HD, Arte HD and M6 HD.

On sale for 99 euros (recommended retail price), the non-proprietary FRANSAT™ decoders will be produced by multiple suppliers. In addition to decrypting channels, the decoders will facilitate automatic channel numbering and provide a parental lock. The platform will be encrypted, available without subscription, and reserved for homes in metropolitan France.

Commenting on the announcement, Giuliano Berretta, Chairman and CEO of Eutelsat Communications, said: *“By offering all French free DTT channels to homes beyond range of terrestrial reception Eutelsat is demonstrating its ambition to accompany the transition to digital for all French homes, and to pursue the universal service mission of the 5° West neighbourhood. With FRANSAT™ satellite technology is once again showing how it complements terrestrial networks and plays a key role at the heart of the digital economy. By accelerating the digitisation process of our longstanding installed base of antennas pointed towards 5° West, we are consolidating this neighbourhood’s role as a major video pole for the French market and providing a valuable new opportunity for our client operators to develop digital services.”*

### **About Eutelsat Communications**

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is the holding company of Eutelsat S.A.. With capacity commercialised on 27 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 31 December 2008, Eutelsat’s satellites were broadcasting more than 3,200 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 591 commercial, technical and operational experts from 27 countries.

[www.eutelsat.com](http://www.eutelsat.com)

### **For further information**

#### **Press contacts**

Vanessa O’Connor

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

[voconnor@eutelsat.fr](mailto:voconnor@eutelsat.fr)

Frédérique Gautier

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 38 88

[fgautier@eutelsat.fr](mailto:fgautier@eutelsat.fr)

#### **Investor relations**

Gilles Janvier

Tel: + 33 1 53 98 35 30

[investors@eutelsat-communications.com](mailto:investors@eutelsat-communications.com)