

Fourteen Galileo Navigation Satellites

The European Commission today announced that it has selected the consortium led by OHB-System AG and Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd. (SSTL) for building and testing fourteen satellites for the Galileo satellite navigation system, a programme of and funded by the European Union. This selection is a major milestone for the European Commission, assisted by the European Space Agency, which initiated the tendering process for these satellites in September 2008.

Berry Smutny, CEO of OHB-System AG, stated upon learning of the decision "We are very pleased and honoured with the Commission's decision. Galileo is one of the EU's most important infrastructure programmes entering now the decisive implementation phase. We will simply start and do our industrial job; this is a big success for Bremen. We are very proud to serve this programme along the road towards the creation of Europe's own satellite navigation system."

Matt Perkins SSTL's Group CEO added "Through the GIOVE programme, SSTL has demonstrated that it has the ability to play a major role in Galileo. We are very pleased that the OHB-SSTL team has been selected for part of the full operational system".

As a result of this decision, OHB-System will be assuming the role of prime contractor for the fabrication of the 14 satellites, including full responsibility for developing the satellite platform and overall integration of the satellites. SSTL will build and integrate the navigation payloads and support OHB with the final integration, using its successful experience from GIOVE-A, the first Galileo satellite, launched in 2005. The 14 satellites will be assembled in Bremen.

"The award of this contract to our team reflects the European faith in fair competition and shows that the EC and ESA consider us to be a highly trustworthy satellite supplier with leading-edge technology," Smutny added. "We wish to thank both institutions for the professional and fair bidding process and for the constructive dialogue. We will now be devoting all our resources to implementing our part of the programme to the customer's complete satisfaction and creating new and sustainable employment."

In the construction of the satellites, both partners will be able to harvest the many years of experience which they have amassed. Not least of all, OHB-System successfully built and launched the German SAR-Lupe radar reconnaissance system, a constellation of five satellites, on time and within budget. SSTL was responsible for the successful construction and testing of the first Galileo satellite, GIOVE-A and the building and integration of the RapidEye constellation of five spacecraft.

Perkins commented "Having been responsible for GIOVE-A, the first Galileo satellite, which is still in orbit and operational two years beyond its nominal life, we are delighted that the EC and ESA have decided to make the best use of SSTL's and OHB's experience in integrating constellations of spacecraft".

The European Commission divided the invitation for proposals for the entire system into six segments. OHB and SSTL jointly submitted bids for the "satellite" segment, i.e. the development, construction and testing of up to 28 satellites, procured on the basis of mini-competitions between the bidders which have been awarded so-called Multi-Supplier Framework Contracts. The award above concerns a first Work Order of 14 satellites with mini-competitions for other Work Orders to follow at later stages. The other segments for which bids were requested are "System support", "Ground mission system", "Ground control system", "Operations" and "Launchers".