

# Upgrade to Remote Sensing Ground Station

Vexcel has completed a multi-mission upgrade to the recently commissioned Apex remote sensing ground station in Santiago (Chile). The project is part of Lockheed Martin Aeronautic's Industrial Cooperation Program for the F-16 Peace Puma Program. In May 2008, Vexcel provided a complete, integrated, automated, Apex ground station to the Chilean Air Force's AeroPhotogrammetric Service (Fuerza Aerea de Chile Servicio Aerofotogrametrico | FACH SAF) initially configured for reception and processing of NASA's MODIS electro-optical sensor on the Terra and Aqua satellites.

Since then, the ground station has been operational 24x7x365 receiving, processing, cataloging, and disseminating MODIS image products. Now, Vexcel has added support for the EROS-B high-resolution panchromatic optical satellite from Imagesat International and the SPOT-4 medium resolution multi-spectral optical satellite from Spot Image. All 4 satellites are now seamlessly integrated into the Apex Commander remote sensing data management system allowing FACH SAF to receive and process these missions automatically from a single consistent user interface.

One of the first MODIS images received at the new station by its 6.1m radome-enclosed X-band tracking antenna clearly depicted the early May 2008 eruption of the Chaitén volcano in southern Chile. One of the first SPOT-4 images received after the station upgrade depicted a long cloud free swath over north central Chile from the Bolivian border, across the Atacama desert, and down to Antofagasta. An EROS-B image captured by Imagesat after station construction in November 2008 showed the radome and SAF facility situated on the north end of the runway at the Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport.