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## **EUTELSAT's HOT BIRD™ 9 AND W2M SATELLITES LOFTED INTO ORBIT**

Paris, 20 December 2008

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL) today announced the successful launch of its HOT BIRD™ 9 and W2M satellites from the European spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, by an Ariane 5 ECA rocket.

Speaking at Eutelsat's Paris headquarters after the live retransmission of the launch, Giuliano Berretta, Chairman and CEO commented: *"This successful dual launch of two Eutelsat satellites is a major step forward in our far-reaching in-orbit investment programme for 2008-2011 and clears the way for Eutelsat to accomplish a raft of strategic objectives in terms of managing our in-orbit resources. The first of these objectives is to raise even further the in-orbit sparing capability of our flagship video neighbourhood at 13° East to one of the highest levels in the world by collocating HOT BIRD™ 9 alongside the identical HOT BIRD™ 8 satellite and HOT BIRD™ 6. The second is to almost double from 20 to 38 the number of transponders at our new 9° East broadcasting position for Europe, with the redeployment to this position of HOT BIRD™ 7A once released from its first mission at 13° East. And the third is that, with W2M, we can renew and reinforce our capacity at 16° East, a leading position for burgeoning digital TV markets in Central and Eastern Europe and islands of the Indian Ocean.*

*These new resources underscore our ability to pursue sustainable growth in digital TV and broadband markets, which continue to confirm their dynamic potential. I would particularly like to thank our partners from industry, EADS Astrium and ISRO, who have successfully worked on these important Eutelsat programmes, as well as Arianespace for another perfect launch."*

Lift-off of the Ariane 5 ECA rocket carrying the HOT BIRD™ 9 and W2M satellites, an aggregate mass at launch of 8.3 tonnes, was at 19h35 local time in French Guiana (22h35 GMT, 23h35 Paris time) on Saturday, 20 December.

HOT BIRD™ 9 was separated from the launch vehicle 27 minutes after lift-off and the first telemetry reception was confirmed by the Hartebeesthoek earth station in South

Africa. W2M was separated from the launch vehicle 32 minutes after lift-off with first telemetry reception confirmed by the Bangalore earth station in India.

For HOT BIRD™ 9, the operations needed to circularise its orbit, place the satellite into its operational configuration and carry out in-orbit testing will be controlled by Eutelsat from its satellite control centre at the Rambouillet teleport (near Paris), using a global network of earth stations made available by the CNES (French space agency). The same operations will be performed in parallel for W2M by the Indian Space Agency, ISRO, from its control centre at Hassan (200 km north of Bangalore in India).

After three firings of their apogee motors over the next 10 days to inject the satellites into a circular geostationary orbit, each will be transferred to a location for in-orbit tests before transfer to their designated operational positions: 13 degrees East for HOT BIRD™ 9 and 16 degrees East for W2M.

### **Profile and mission of HOT BIRD™ 9**

Prime contractor	EADS - Astrium
Platform	Eurostar 3000
Mission	TV and radio broadcasting
Orbital position	13 degrees East
Coverage	Europe, Middle East, North Africa
Launcher	Ariane 5 ECA
Dimensions	3.4 x 2.7 x 6.3 m
Span in orbit	38 m with solar panels deployed
Mass at launch	4 884 kg
Lifetime	> 15 years
Payload	64 Ku-band transponders
Electric power	14.5 kW
Downlink frequencies	10.7 – 12.75 GHz

Built by EADS Astrium, HOT BIRD™ 9 will join Eutelsat's flagship broadcasting neighbourhood at 13° East where it will be collocated with HOT BIRD™ 6, launched in 2002, and HOT BIRD™ 8, launched in 2006. With nearly 1 100 channels serving an audience of 120 million homes in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, 13° East is the world's leading satellite neighbourhood. Eutelsat currently generates almost 40% of its revenues at this orbital position, and 60% of its backlog targets this same orbital slot. The sparing capability will be achieved through three identical high-capacity satellites built by EADS Astrium, capable between them of providing redundancy to secure all 102 transponders operated at this location. HOT BIRD™ 9 will join HOT BIRD™ 8 to further bolster the inter-satellite sparing programme which will be completed with HOT BIRD™ 10 after the redeployment of HOT BIRD™ 6.

The entry into service of HOT BIRD™ 9 will also release Eutelsat's HOT BIRD™ 7A satellite from its original mission at 13° East. HOT BIRD™ 7A will be redeployed to Eutelsat's new broadcasting position for Europe at 9° East, thereby raising the number of operational transponders here from 20 to 38. Eighteen months after opening for business this orbital location is already transmitting 150 channels, including 18 HDTV channels. Its proximity to the HOT BIRD™ neighbourhood enables homes equipped for DTH reception to receive channels from 13° East and 9° East using a dual-feed dish.

### **Profile and mission of W2M**

Prime contractor	EADS Astrium and ISRO (Indian Space Agency)
Platform	ISRO 1-3K
Mission	TV broadcasting, data networks, Internet services
Orbital position	16 degrees East
Coverage	Fixed beam: Europe, Middle East, North Africa Steerable beam: Indian Ocean islands
Launcher	Ariane 5 ECA
Dimensions	1.8 x 2.0 x 5.0 m
Span in-orbit	15.7 m with solar panels deployed
Mass at launch	3 463 kg
Lifetime	> 15 years
Operational payload	Up to 30 Ku-band transponders
Electric power	7 kW
Downlink frequencies	10.95 – 11.70 GHz; 12.50 – 12.75 GHz

W2M will be located at 16° East to replace Eutelsat's W2 satellite which has been in service since 1998. With seven anchor pay-TV platforms and almost 400 channels, 16° East is one of the leading neighbourhoods serving rapidly-expanding television markets in Central and Eastern Europe as well as islands in the Indian Ocean. Satellite and cable reception in Central and Eastern Europe has attracted continuous double-digit growth over the last five years, while the Balkan region has seen the number of homes subscribing to satellite-delivered pay-TV grow fourfold over the last two years.

Built by a consortium of EADS Astrium and ISRO (the Indian Space Agency), W2M delivers a payload which will operate up to 30 transponders. With a planned in-orbit lifetime of 15 years, the satellite offers considerable flexibility for broadcasting, corporate networks and Internet access services via a fixed beam covering Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and a steerable beam centred over Indian Ocean islands.

### **About Eutelsat Communications**

Eutelsat Communications (Euronext Paris: ETL, ISIN code: FR0010221234) is the holding company of Eutelsat S.A.. With capacity commercialised on 24 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](http://www.eutelsat.com)

### **For further information**

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