

New Perspectives of Planet Earth

The first German commercial satellite mission is on its way to space – RapidEye AG ready to send its constellation of five satellites into orbit

Brandenburg a. d. Havel, Germany 15.08.08 – With all of the necessary components for the launch of the RapidEye satellite constellation currently waiting in Baikonur, Kazakhstan, nothing seems to be standing in the way of an August launch for the German company RapidEye AG.

All five earth observation satellites will be sent into orbit on a DNEPR-1 launch vehicle, released into a shared orbit at 630km and will circle the globe 15 times daily. With the constellation designed with built-in redundancy and the use of high-technology sensors, RapidEye will be able to reliably deliver high-quality data from any point on earth every day. The space segment is supplemented by a satellite control center, processing and archiving systems. The collected imagery will be an integral part of providing important decision making tools for RapidEye's customers in industries such as agriculture, forestry and cartography.

“Everyone involved with the RapidEye mission has been waiting a long time for this announcement. We are happy to confirm that the planned launch date is August 29th at 9:15 a.m. Brandenburg time”, remarked Wolfgang Biedermann, RapidEye's CEO. “We've been working diligently over the last 10 years to secure project financing, to realize the satellite constellation, while simultaneously producing a wide variety of services which our own satellite imagery can soon be integrated into. The combination of our frequent revisit capabilities, large area coverage, system reliability and the know-how of our international team members and partners will open up new possibilities in Management Information and Geo Information services. We will be able to deliver imagery and services to our customers for crop planning, crop identification, and damage assessment following a natural disaster. We can expect the satellites to be commercially operational before the end of the year, which will be just as much of an important milestone for our company as the launch.”

Canadian space specialists MDA (MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates Ltd.), have been the most important partner in the development of the RapidEye satellite system. As RapidEye's prime contractor, MDA has provided the acquisition planning and data pre-processing systems. They also perform all system engineering and program management tasks.

“This is also an important moment for us as a company”, says Steve Oldham, Vice President for Satellite Missions at MDA. “RapidEye is the first operational small satellite constellation developed by MDA. The development of the RapidEye constellation, including the ground planning and processing system, represents a breakthrough in offering world class data from a turn-key mission. We are proud to have worked with RapidEye to enable their mission.”

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RapidEye: The “one-stop-shop” for geospatial products and services, delivering next-generation earth observation for commercial use and scientific purposes

“The result of our cooperation with MDA is a satellite constellation that will collect massive amounts of earth observation data. We have the ability to cover an area over 11 times the size of Germany every day, and our satellites, which were constructed by British satellite specialists SSTL, will be controlled directly from our headquarters here in Brandenburg an der Havel,” comments Biedermann, “We will be able to deliver data about a customer’s area of interest as often as they need it, quickly and at a very competitive cost.”

MDA has subcontracted Jena-Optronik GmbH of Jena, Germany to provide the multi-spectral pushbroom sensors that are the payload of the satellites. These “cameras” can produce earth observation data in five spectral bands: red, green, blue, near infrared and red edge. RapidEye’s constellation are the first commercial satellites to feature the red edge band. The combination of these five spectral bands is ideally suited to monitor vegetation conditions and to detect growth anomalies.

“With our system, we will close the gap that has been existent for a long time between the commercial and the scientific communities in the area of geoinformation services, as our imagery is the next generation of optical earth observation,” continues Biedermann, “This is why our data products have been highly anticipated in many different markets.”

This is also being confirmed by Vereinigte Hagel, the European market leader in agricultural insurance, who recognized the benefit of new technologies in remote sensing at an early stage. The company, located in Giessen, Germany, was a co-founder of RapidEye ten years ago and is convinced of the world-wide applications of RapidEye’s services.

Thunderstorm frequency and intensity have been increasing in recent years, and are a threat to agricultural crops of every kind. For farmers, risk management by insuring against the forces of nature is essential. If the extent of damage after a disastrous weather event can be defined rapidly and precisely, the compensation due back to the farmers can be assessed more quickly and accurately, pleasing both the company and the customer.

“Vegetation monitoring by RapidEye delivers ideal conditions for that”, says CEO of Vereinigte Hagel, Dr. Dietrich Heine, who is also the deputy head of RapidEye’s supervisory board. “As soon as the long awaited data is available, we will have precise information about crop conditions before, during and after a storm and how they develop afterwards. This is a quantum jump from the current damage assessment process.”

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One Partner that has supported RapidEye AG from the very beginning is the German Aerospace Center (DLR). With its assistance towards the RapidEye business model, it started RapidEye on the road to reality as a business. The Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology contributed about 10 percent of the total funding necessary for the company through the DLR. Satellite data will be provided for science and research through an agreement between the DLR and RapidEye, giving geoscience and environmental researchers hope for answers to some of their questions about the current state of the earth.

RapidEye AG – “Working globally; acting locally”

Support from the German state of Brandenburg, the Federal Republic of Germany and the European Union has helped to bring the RapidEye project to fruition. Since September of 2004, RapidEye's headquarters have been in the city of Brandenburg an der Havel, near Berlin, and this has brought over 90 jobs to the area, with the expectation of bringing another 40 in the coming months. “The city of Brandenburg has been very kind and welcoming since our move here. To show our appreciation, the cone on the launch vehicle will have the Brandenburg coat of arms along with the logos from MDA and RapidEye, making Brandenburg 'a city in space',” announced Wolfgang Biedermann, CEO of RapidEye. “We are also working closely with the city on the launch party. RapidEye and the city of Brandenburg would like to cordially invite everyone to our public launch party in front of our headquarters on the Neustadt Markt on August 29 at 8:30 a.m., where you can join us in following the big event live. We hope you can share this exciting day with us.”

To get everyone involved and support a local charitable organization, RapidEye has invited everyone to name their five satellites. This contest, which began in mid-July, gives everyone worldwide the opportunity to submit as many names for the satellites as they wish, while supporting Gollwitz Manor House, a Brandenburg charity addressing the issues of racism and xenophobia with young adults. The contest will run up to 3 days prior to the launch event but at least until August 26, with the winner to be announced at the public launch party.

For more detailed information about the contest and the most current information regarding RapidEye's launch, please visit: www.rapideye.de/launch2008.

About RapidEye AG

RapidEye is an ISO-certified geospatial information provider focused on integrating customized and industry specific solutions into the workflow of global customers in agriculture, forestry, energy, infrastructure, government, security and emergency. RapidEye's experts and the satellite system – a constellation of five satellites capable of downloading over 4 million km² of high resolution, multi-spectral imagery per day, a control station and a ground segment for processing and archiving data – allow for cost-effective customized

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services. The unique combination of large area coverage, high spatial resolution and the possibility of daily revisit to an area provide for superior management information solutions in agriculture, forestry and cartography. Currently more than 90 experts from more than 20 countries worldwide are employed by RapidEye. Following a successful launch, plans are being made to increase the team to over 140. For more information, please visit www.rapideye.de.

About MacDonald, Dettwiler and Associates Ltd. (MDA)

MDA provides advanced information solutions that capture and process vast amounts of data, produce essential information, and improve the decision making and operational performance of business and government organizations worldwide.

Focused on markets and customers with strong repeat business potential, MDA delivers a broad spectrum of earth and space based information solutions, ranging from complex operational systems, to tailored information services, to electronic information products. MDA employs more than 3,000 people in locations across the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. The Company's common shares trade on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol TSX: MDA.

For more information, visit: www.mdacorporation.com.

About Vereinigte Hagel VVaG

Vereinigte Hagel is a specialized hail insurance provider for agriculture, vegetable, fruit and viticulture farming, and is the largest such provider in Germany. With an association of over 115,000 members, approximately 4,000 agencies advise and care for these members. Vereinigte Hagel employs more than 1,000 licensed appraisers, who locally evaluate damages. The company is currently insuring more than 4.5 million hectares of agricultural land in Europe out of its eight regional offices coordinated from Giessen, Germany. Vereinigte Hagel insures over 5 billion Euro worth of farmland in Europe.

More information can be found at www.vereinigte-hagel.net

About DLR

DLR is Germany's national research center for aeronautics and space. Its extensive research and development work in Aeronautics, Space, Transportation and Energy is integrated into national and international cooperative ventures. As Germany's space agency, DLR has been given responsibility for the forward planning and the implementation of the German space program by the German federal government as well as for the international representation of German interests. Furthermore, Germany's largest project-

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management agency is also part of DLR.

Approximately 5,700 people are employed in DLR's 29 institutes and facilities at thirteen locations in Germany: Koeln (headquarters), Berlin, Bonn, Braunschweig, Bremen, Goettingen, Hamburg, Lampoldshausen, Neustrelitz, Oberpfaffenhofen, Stuttgart, Trauen and Weilheim. DLR also operates offices in Brussels, Paris, and Washington D.C.

About Gollwitz Manor House Trust

Gollwitz Manor House is a place for young adults from all over the world to meet, live together, learn from one another and build long-lasting friendships. Their goal is to support understanding and acceptance between people of different nationalities, religions and cultures while confronting issues of racism, antisemitism and xenophobia. For more information, please refer to www.stiftunggollwitz.de

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Underline: Model of RapidEye's satellite constellation (Source: RapidEye)