

Press Release

25 July 2014

SSTL marks completion of TechDemoSat-1 LEOP phase with a “selfie”

Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL) releases an image taken by an inspection camera on board TechDemoSat-1 to mark the completion of the Launch and Early Operations Phase (LEOP) for the satellite, which was launched on 8th July. The image was taken minutes after separation of the satellite from the Soyuz-2 launcher and shows a view of the Earth from space, with the spacecraft’s Antenna Pointing Mechanism in shot.

The inspection camera which took the image is mounted on the exterior of the spacecraft, and will monitor the behaviour of key mechanical payloads. It was manufactured by SSTL’s optics experts from COTS (Commercial-Off-The-Shelf) technologies and combines a colour CMOS camera with a high performance machine vision lens. Both the camera and lens were stripped down and ruggedized to survive the vibration and shock loads experienced during launch. The camera system was optimised to give a depth of field capable of delivering an in-focus image of the Antenna Pointing Mechanism and also the Earth in the background.

The LEOP phase immediately after the launch is the first part of the in-orbit commissioning process for the satellite - a managed series of tests and operations to check out the functionality of the key operating systems, such as power, communications, propulsion, attitude control and on board computing.

TechDemoSat-1 is the first satellite to be controlled by the Satellite Applications Catapult in Harwell, and the commissioning of the platform systems is being performed from there by a team led by SSTL.

TechDemoSat-1 is based on the SSTL-150 platform and is part-funded by a grant from the UK’s Technology Strategy Board and SEEDA (South East England Development Agency). The spacecraft carries eight separate payloads from UK academia and industry, providing valuable in-orbit validation for new technologies, and also flies more than 25 new developments for SSTL.



About SSTL

Surrey Satellite Technology Limited (SSTL) is the world's leading small satellite company, delivering operational space missions for a range of applications including Earth observation, science and communications. The Company designs, manufactures and operates high performance satellites and ground systems for a fraction of the price normally associated with space missions, with 500 staff working on turnkey satellite platforms, space-proven satellite subsystems and optical instruments.

Since 1981 SSTL has built and launched 43 satellites – as well as providing training and development programmes, consultancy services, and mission studies for ESA, NASA, international governments and commercial customers, with its innovative approach that is changing the economics of space.

Headquartered in Guildford, UK, SSTL is part of the Airbus Group.

www.sstl.co.uk

Notes to editor:

This press release can be downloaded as a Word or PDF document at the following url: <http://www.sstl.co.uk/news-and-events>

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