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NPR Satellite Services®

Fall 2006

NPR Satellite Services Switches to New Satellite

NPR Satellite Services has a new home in space—PanAmSat's Galaxy 16 satellite. The new satellite, built by Space Systems/Loral, is a Loral FS 1300 Omega 2 series satellite with 24 C-band and 24 Ku-band transponders. PanAmSat describes Galaxy 16 as a "broadcast, high-definition, and data powerhouse" which will serve several major clients, including NPR Satellite Services.

Early on the morning of June 18, Sea Launch Company successfully launched Galaxy 16 from its Odyssey Launch Platform in the Pacific Ocean. Once in orbit, Galaxy 16 replaced Galaxy 4-R as the satellite that broadcasts all of our customers' content. Our service migrated to the new satellite on Monday, August 14, 2006. Although the transition went smoothly and Galaxy 16 appears to be working perfectly, PanAmSat already has an extensive emergency back-up system in place; two spares are already in orbit and an additional ground spare will be ready for launch this winter.

Like most communications satellites, Galaxy 16 has a spot in geostationary orbit, which means that it orbits around the equator at the same speed that the earth rotates. Geostationary orbit is ideal for a communications satellite because the satellite can maintain a constant position relative to the earth's surface, so the same footprint is always in view. For Galaxy 16, this constant position is at 99° W longitude, 22,300

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30° 60° 90°

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miles above the equator. This translates to a spot directly above the Pacific Ocean, several hundred miles west of Ecuador. In order to keep this exact location, Galaxy 16 (like all satellites in geostationary orbit) must occasionally make small adjustments to its position. This process is known as "stationkeeping." Older satellites use regular rocket fuel for this, but Galaxy 16 and other late-model satellites use state-of-the-art propulsion systems that are much more lightweight. This means that Galaxy 16 can carry more equipment on board and have a longer lifespan—Galaxy 16 is expected to last as long as 15 years before needing to be replaced.

The launch of Galaxy 16 was PanAmSat's last launch before its official merger with Intelsat, the world's largest commercial satellite communications provider. The newly combined fleet now totals 51 satellites that cover most of the globe.

For a detailed timeline, video, and photos of the Galaxy 16 mission, visit http://www.sea-launch.com/past_launches.htm.

Galaxy 16 Key Parameters			
Total Transponders	C-band:	24 x 36 MHz	
	Ku-band:	24 x 36 MHz	
Polarization	C-band:	Linear - Horizontal or Vertical	
	Ku-band:	Linear - Horizontal or Vertical	
Downlink Frequency	C-band:	3700 to 4200 MHz	
	Ku-band:	11.70 to 12.20 GHz	
Uplink Frequency	C-band:	5925 to 6425 MHz	
	Ku-band:	14.00 to 14.50 GHz	

McDowell Replaces Abernathy on Federal Communications Commission

In June, Robert M. McDowell was sworn in as a new member of the FCC, filling the seat vacated by Kathleen Abernathy. Nominated by President George W. Bush, McDowell was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

McDowell brings with him years of experience in the communications industry. Immediately prior to his nomination, he served as the senior vice president and assistant general counsel for COMPTEL, an industry association for communication service providers. Prior to joining COMPTEL, Commissioner McDowell was the executive vice president and general counsel for America's Carrier Telecommunications Association (ACTA).

FCC Chairman Kevin Martin, who presided over the swearing-in ceremony, welcomed McDowell, saying, "I congratulate Rob McDowell on his confirmation as Commissioner at the FCC. He has a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the communications arena, and we will rely on his insight."



Robert M. McDowell

With his predecessor Abernathy overstaying the end of her term by nearly a year, McDowell will only serve the remaining four years in what is usually a five-year term.

FCC Reviews Broadcast Ownership Rules

In accordance with a 2004 appellate decision and the statutory mandate of "periodic reviews" (Telecommunications Act of 1996, Section 202(h)), the Federal Communications Commission initiated another round of rulemaking procedures in June. The public, the media industry, and other experts are now called upon to submit comments and factual data on how rules need to be revised in order to meet FCC policy goals and fulfill the FCC's legal obligation to create a media environment in which competition, localism, and diversity are adequately enforced. The rules under review are the Local Television Ownership Limit, the Local Radio Ownership Limit, the UHF discount used to calculate national television ownership limits, the Newspaper/Broadcast Cross-Ownership Ban, the Radio/Television Cross-Ownership Limit, and the Dual Network Ban.

The Commission will use a filing system that allows short comments to be sent via email and long documents to be uploaded through the main page of the Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). In addition to research studies commissioned by the FCC, a series of public hearings will be held at locations across the country. For more information and to submit your comments, visit www.fcc.gov.

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