

PRESS RELEASE

Satellite Adaptor: a satellite system for emergency communications

The first European solution for civil protection from ESA and Telespazio (Finmeccanica/Alcatel). The Piedmont Region Civil Protection Agency will test the new technological solutions

Turin, 30 March 2007 – When major national and international emergencies occur, it is vital to ensure that communication networks continue to function so that rescue operations can be carried out as quickly and effectively as possible.

To this end, the European Space Agency (ESA) has launched the “Satellite Adaptor” project together with Telespazio (a Finmeccanica/Alcatel company), the Piedmont regional authorities and the local Civil Protection Agency. Telespazio will lead a team that will also include members from Alcatel Alenia Space, Indra and Hispasat. The task of Piedmont’s Civil Protection Agency will be to test the new satellite technology solutions in the field of operations.

The ESA’s aim is to encourage the standardisation of new systems and facilitate dialogue between Europe’s civil protection agencies. This will lay the foundation for “harmonised” technological development in accordance with the requirements of these agencies, which will now be able to take action anywhere in the world using a satellite system that integrates the various national systems and can provide premium quality and extremely reliable audio and video communications.

The “Pan-European Satellite Telecom Adaptor”, developed by Telespazio, will be based around an integrated communications system that will enable each civil protection agency to connect its operations centre with the emergency scene. The main new development with this system is its interoperability with satellites based on different standards, which, thanks to the Satellite Adaptor, can now interact with each other to provide a secure and reliable broadband connection.

Another development, which constitutes a first, is the integration of all the wireless and satellite telecommunications components: this will enable operators to use existing communications systems to connect, via satellite, with the terrestrial networks.