ATLAS Bolsters Global Ground Network for Two Satellites

ATLAS Space Operations, a leading innovator of ground communications in the space industry, continues to grow its on-orbit customer base with two additional launches. BlackSky Global's Global-3 and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) COSMIC-2 both successfully launched into orbit, utilizing ATLAS for communications and data support.

ATLAS is tasked with providing ground station operations as well as telemetry, command, and data support for both BlackSky and NOAA's newly deployed satellites. ATLAS will support the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) constellations via their global network of ground stations, including their four newest antennas located in Sunyani, Ghana; Harmon, Guam; Tahiti, French Polynesia; Chitose, Japan.

"ATLAS is proud to be a key support element for all of our customers who have successfully deployed from these historic launches," said Sean McDaniel, CEO and Co-Founder of ATLAS. "We are committed to delivering valuable, low latency Earth imagery data for our BlackSky Global customers. We have been working with NOAA since early 2017 to build and test ground systems that are critical to the continuation of NOAA's GPS Radio Occultation data collection mission via COSMIC-2. We share in the team's excitement in achieving this much-anticipated milestone."

Satellite Launches

NOAA successfully launched and deployed six satellites as a part of the 25 June 2019 SpaceX Falcon Heavy launch from the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida. The Constellation Observing System for Meteorology (COSMIC-2) will orbit Earth collecting data for weather forecasting, climate monitoring and research space weather. The six-satellite constellation will help to improve weather prediction models for years to come and provide three times the data COSMIC-1 was able to capture.

BlackSky's Global-3 launched out of Mahia Peninsula, New Zealand aboard Rocket Lab's Electron launch vehicle as a part of the "Make it Rain" mission – a nod to the heavy precipitation in both Seattle and New Zealand. Global-3 is part of a planned sixty-satellite constellation that will provide 1-metre resolution colour imagery with frequent revisit rates of 95% of the Earth's population.

The ATLAS network currently consists of thirty operational and planned antennas globally employing Freedom, a proprietary software platform that allows for seamless customer integration into the communication network while optimizing all mission-critical components and providing automated pass scheduling. The cloud-based software approach makes communicating with both commercial and U.S. civil spacecraft simpler and more cost-effective by reducing capital expenditures at every ground entry point.