

## UPC contracts Astra transponder

### Europe

SES Astra, an SES Global company, and UPC have announced the conclusion of an agreement for a fourth transponder on the Astra Satellite System at 19.2 degrees East.

The activation of a fourth Astra transponder will allow UPC to further enhance its programme offering for its current DTH markets in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The additional channel line-up includes MTG-owned Viasat Explorer and Viasat History, Cartoon Network, AXN and Boomerang. UPC's 4th transponder is located on Astra 1E.

Balazs Sranko, Managing Director of UPC's satellite television service 'UPC Direct Plus' said: "UPC is using an extra Astra transponder to provide its

satellite television customers in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic an additional package of seven television channels. This will enable our customers to watch, in digital quality, even more top quality entertaining and educational programmes."

Alexander Oudendijk, Senior Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer at SES Astra, commented: "We are very pleased with the agreement on the new transponder, which will allow UPC to further expand in the Central and Eastern European markets. This is UPC's fourth Astra transponder since the launch of its satellite television service 'UPC Direct Plus' in 2002, which demonstrates the large growth potential in these

markets. Together with UPC, we are fully committed to the further development of the Direct-To-Home (DTH) markets in Central and Eastern Europe. We therefore very much appreciate the solid and close partnership with UPC as the leading DTH bouquet provider for the region and look forward to a continued fruitful co-operation."

In the framework of the transponder agreement, UPC Direct selected SES Astra TechCom S.A., the recently established technical services and products subsidiary of SES Astra, for the provision of a new uplink station that will transmit the additional channels. The uplink station will be installed in The Netherlands next to UPC Direct's uplink antennas. □

## MSV patent awarded

### North America

Mobile Satellite Ventures (MSV) has been awarded its fifth hybrid satellite-terrestrial system patent, covering 34 claims. The award of this patent brings the total number of awarded claims for MSV originated Ancillary Terrestrial Component (ATC) patents to approximately 650. In addition, MSV has added to its expansive developed holdings the entire patent portfolio of Celsat, one of the original developers of the hybrid satellite-terrestrial system concept.

This latest patent issuance, together with the Celsat acquisition, accelerates MSV's position as the leader in the forefront of ATC technology. "Early on, MSV recognised the criticality of developing 'the best in class' ATC patent portfolio," stated Alexander H. Good, Vice Chairman (VC) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MSV.

"MSV has had a sharp focus on the development of the most efficient and effective means to implement each and every element of ATC. If it touches an ATC system, MSV has thought long and hard about that technology and has an intricate matrix of patents covering all those components," he added.

The most recent patent - Systems and Methods for Handover Between Space Based and Terrestrial Radioterminal Communications, and for Monitoring Terrestrially Reused Satellite Frequencies at a Radioterminal to Reduce Potential Interference - describes ways of minimising uplink interference from ATC terminals to a satellite by handing over communications from the ATC to the satellite.

The patent also describes how satellite signals received at ATC terminals may be monitored to determine potential interference. "This patent sets the parameters for uplink interference-driven handover," said Dr Santanu Dutta, Vice President (VP) systems engineering at MSV. □

## Hispasat certifies Integrasys

### Spain

Satellite service provider Hispasat has certified Integrasys' SatmotionPocket to be fully compliant to its radio and IP broadband hub systems requirements. The Integrasys tool has been integrated at Hispasat hub station to perform the line-up and commissioning of Satellite Interactive Terminals (SIT).

"Hispasat has adopted Integrasys' SatmotionPocket System, which solves our SIT line-up operational needs, ensuring an scalable, reliable and easy deployment of two-way satellite terminals. This tool simplifies and speeds up the installation process of VSATs" - says Carlos Blanco, Hispasat Head of Broadband Services.

SatmotionPocket is currently being used by Hispasat and its Brazilian subsidiary Hispamar for SITs alignment. Its satellite fleet provides broadband data services to South and North America, Europe and Middle-

## SES Astra ups shareholding in Satlynx

### EMEA

The SES Group has increased its shareholding in Satlynx from 41 per cent to 77 per cent, taking full operational control. As a result of the equity realignment, Alcatel Space and Gilat now hold 6 per cent and 17 per cent of the shares of Satlynx, respectively. The SES participation will be managed through SES Astra, the leading satellite services provider in Europe, and the company managing the SES Group's activities in the Europe the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region.

Ferdinand Kayser, President and CEO of SES Astra, stated: "This shareholder restructuring enables us to fur-

ther align Satlynx with the strategic objectives of SES Astra. Satlynx's managed networks expertise complements SES Astra's and is consistent with our strategy of developing our ability to provide end-to-end customer solutions."

Paul Heinerscheid, CEO of Satlynx, commented: "This shareholder restructuring, along with the operational integration into SES Astra, provides Satlynx with a secure financial base and enhances our market position. It enables us to tap existing and proven resources for the development of new business opportunities, and to strengthen Satlynx's competitive positioning." □

East from the 30 degrees and the 61 degrees West orbital positions.

The Spanish operator currently manages the world's largest multimedia broadband platform based on Direct Video

Broadcasting Return Channel via Satellite (DVB-RCS), the two way communication over satellite standard that enables manufacturers interoperability, vendors choice and affordable prices to customers. □