October 23, 2018

Global Eagle, Telesat Pioneer First Ever In-Flight Broadband Connectivity via Low-Earth Orbit Satellite

Successful Test is a Major Milestone for Next-Generation Connectivity Everywhere

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 23, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Global Eagle Entertainment Inc. [NASDAQ: ENT] today announced a major milestone in the history of satellite connectivity for aviation and maritime: the successful completion of testing to demonstrate how a new, low-cost satellite network can revolutionize the way airline and maritime passengers enjoy high-speed connectivity and content.

The testing began October 18th, 2018 aboard Global Eagle's 'Albatross One' test aircraft near Telesat headquarters in Ottawa, Canada. This test marked the first time an in-flight aircraft has communicated at broadband speeds with a Low-Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite system, demonstrating the capabilities of LEO for mobility customers. Telesat's Phase 1 LEO satellite was launched earlier this year with Telesat and Global Eagle agreeing to collaborate on LEO system development, testing and marketing.

During inflight testing, the team successfully demonstrated industry-leading data upload speeds from the aircraft, engaged in uninterrupted video chatting and movie streaming, and experienced the lowest latency of any satellite connection to date.

Testing demonstrates how a global LEO constellation of satellites that includes polar regions not covered today, coupled with scalable capacity at broadband speeds and the lowest latency of any satellite solution can change the market dynamics in aviation and maritime.

Tests also were conducted to ensure the smooth transition from existing Geostationary (GEO) satellite networks to LEO while switching satellites in-flight. A Global Eagle test team live-switched back-and-forth between Telesat's Anik F3 GEO satellite and Telesat's Phase 1 LEO satellite. The tests were successful in demonstrating seamless connectivity while systems switch between satellites.

Among the test highlights, Global Eagle and Telesat:

- Validated Global Eagle's Q09000 antenna tracking capabilities on LEO Phase 1 satellite during flight tests
- Completed satellite transitions between LEO Phase 1 satellite and ANIK F3 GEO satellite using Global Eagle Ka-band System integrated with Gilat GLT-1000 modems
- Maintained multiple air-to-ground two-way videoconference sessions during satellite transitions and observed secure cloud and VPN applications
- Observed the shortest-ever connection time of only 19 milliseconds round-trip time from aircraft to ground equipment

“It is all-systems go for revolutionizing the passenger experience and changing the cost structure for airlines and maritime markets,” said Per Norén, Global Eagle Executive VP and Chief Commercial Officer. “This is an incredible milestone that shows how low-cost, low-latency and high-bandwidth systems will allow our customers in aviation and maritime to enjoy a better overall broadband experience on board.”

“Telesat is very pleased to be collaborating with innovative companies like Global Eagle who recognize the potential of Telesat’s LEO system to transform global communications,” said Erwin Hudson, Vice President, Telesat LEO. “Combining global spectrum rights in Ka-band with Telesat’s proprietary LEO architecture, our companies’ systems will satisfy many of the world’s most challenging communications requirements, including the ability to provide high performing, cost effective fiber quality connectivity to millions of airline and maritime passengers worldwide. Telesat will continue to work with Global Eagle to optimize the design and performance of Telesat’s LEO system to ensure it meets the demanding and rapidly expanding requirements of aeronautical and maritime users.”

Telesat is developing an advanced LEO constellation with plans for a global network scaling to nearly 300 satellites. Further, the Telesat LEO constellation has highly agile spot beams which focus capacity into high-demand areas such as airports and will deliver an order of magnitude greater broadband capacity than current systems. Telesat has contracted with two teams, Airbus and a joint team of Thales Alenia Space with Maxar’s SSL and MDA, to design the system. Telesat plans to award a manufacturing contract to one of the teams in 2019 and is targeting 2022 for start of commercial LEO service.

“We would like to thank all the teammates who were part of this historic test, including Telesat, ground link provider Gilat, Ka-band antenna supplier Qest and the many Global Eagle engineers and test staff who worked to make this test successful,” Norén said.

About Global Eagle

Global Eagle is a leading provider of media, content and data analytics to markets across air, sea and land. Global Eagle offers a fully integrated suite of rich media content and seamless connectivity solutions to airlines, cruise lines, commercial ships, high-end yachts, ferries and land locations worldwide. With approximately 1,400 employees and 52 offices on six continents and leading global satellite and ground networks, the company delivers exceptional service and rapid support to a diverse customer base. Find out more at GlobalEagle.com.

Media Contact:
Michael Miller, 754-215-0101
Michael.Miller@GlobalEagle.com

Source: Global Eagle Entertainment Inc.