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Global Eagle Airconnect Ka Antenna Clears Critical Milestone toward Certification for IFC Deployment on Telesat Lightspeed



Airconnect Ka Solution Enables Fiber-Quality Connectivity on LEO Network at 40,000 feet

LOS ANGELES - May 10, 2021: Global Eagle, the leading provider of high-speed inflight connectivity (IFC) solutions, and [Telesat](#) have cleared a critical milestone in the verification phase for Global Eagle's Airconnect Ka IFC terminal to be used with the Telesat Lightspeed low-earth orbit (LEO) network.

Telesat and Global Eagle engineers recently carried out network simulations to determine the efficiency of the antenna at flight speed and to mimic the real-world experience of use cases requiring fiber-like latency and high-speed throughput from the aircraft, including online gaming, cloud-hosted applications, and content-rich social media. Global Eagle's Airconnect Ka system provides industry-leading efficiency in satellite communications while maintaining full performance when the target satellite is close to the horizon.

This news follows Global Eagle and Telesat's successful LEO demonstrations in October 2018, which were the first time an aircraft in flight had ever communicated at broadband speeds with a satellite operating at low earth orbit. Rigorous testing in multi-orbit configurations achieved round-trip latency of 19ms, compared to traditional geostationary satellite (GEO) networks which experience over 600ms of latency.

As part of Global Eagle's Airconnect family of terminals, Airconnect Ka shares a common design philosophy with Global Eagle's Airconnect Ku and Airconnect Global Ku terminals with millions of flight hours of high-reliability service serving the world's leading airlines.

Tim Southard, Vice President Networks, Global Eagle says: "Our Airconnect Ka system, in conjunction with the Telesat Lightspeed network, will enable airline passengers to play online games like Fortnite and Roblox, live stream video, upload high quality holiday pictures and videos to Instagram and zip through Salesforce and Outlook tasks, as they would on broadband fiber, while at 40,000 feet."

The Airconnect Ka antenna system is ready to use now on the current generation of GEO satellites and is planned to be certified on the Telesat Lightspeed network in the future. Currently, Global Eagle is using Telesat GEO satellites to provide high-quality connectivity to its large number of mobility customers in maritime, aviation and other markets.

Mike Pigott, Executive Vice President Connectivity, Global Eagle, adds: "Achieving this critical milestone lays the foundation for the eventual certification of our Airconnect Ka solution on the Telesat Lightspeed constellation. Our airline customers will benefit from the extraordinary advantages of Telesat Lightspeed network earlier and with few upgrades required after installation.

Telesat's expertise and the advanced Telesat Lightspeed network make us proud to be working together to show the industry-changing capability of LEO. Since 2018, our partnership with Telesat has demonstrated the smooth transition from existing GEO satellite networks to LEO satellites inflight. We now have the confidence to begin installations this year."

"With Global Eagle's Ka terminal evolution, airlines can be confident that they are future-proofing their connectivity decisions today", stated Telesat's Erwin Hudson, Vice President, LEO. "Telesat Lightspeed is the only enterprise-grade LEO network that can provide gate-to-gate, fiber-quality connectivity to every passenger on every flight, anywhere in the world.

"Collaborating with future-focused companies like Global Eagle will enable us to achieve our goal of transforming inflight connectivity with the Telesat Lightspeed network."

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About Global Eagle

[Global Eagle](#) is a leading provider of high-speed connectivity and media solutions for worldwide mobility including airlines, cruise lines, and mission-critical maritime, energy and government applications. The company connects and entertains consumers beyond the reach of telecom and cable providers, in the air and at sea. Global Eagle's open-architecture and multi-platform satellite network provides unique scalability, global coverage, reliability and future compatibility. Global Eagle's content solutions distribute, localize, and broadcast both traditional and native-digital content for airline and cruise markets with embedded customer advertising and analytics. Through its intelligent leadership and innovation, Global Eagle defines next-generation passenger experiences through integrated solutions tailored to our customers' brands and service objectives.

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