

France Telecom And Inmarsat Test Mobile Broadband Solution For End Year Launch

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France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications is Inmarsat's exclusive partner in the development of the upcoming broadband mobile satellite Internet solution, the Inmarsat BGAN (Broadband Global Area Network).

Since August 2004, the two players have worked closely together to establish a terrestrial interconnection for the service.

This new generation of mobile satellite solutions, to be launched at the end of this year, will cover the most remote areas devoid of communications infrastructure through ultra-portable terminals providing transfer rates of up to 492 Kbit/s.

An exclusive technical partnership to test BGAN and develop services

Since August 2004, France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications has made extensive changes to its technical IP platform to allow BGAN users to benefit from specific added value services as soon as it is launched at the end of 2005: traffic supervision and budget management tools, protocol filtering systems and user-friendly, customized user interfaces.

Inmarsat launched its first 4th generation satellite, via which the BGAN service will operate, from Cape Canaveral on 11 March 2005. At the same time, France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications successfully tested two of BGAN's main functions:

- Surfing on Internet
- Assigning IP addresses and establishing a VPN

These tests have been made possible thanks to the IP connection established between the Inmarsat land earth station in the Netherlands and a test platform via a point of presence (POP) both developed by France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications.

Since January 2005, the technical teams of France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications and Inmarsat have worked closely together to conduct tests on the first BGAN terminals. These tests have mainly focused on "standard" IP applications (file transfer protocols, surfing on the Internet, chat, etc.) as well as on network performance and stability levels.

Broadband BGAN (492 Kbit/s) available from November 2005

France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications will market BGAN as of end 2005. For the first time, a new generation of mobile satellite communication services will combine broadband data transmission, ISDN and voice telephony services and will provide the following advantages:

The use of more compact and more mobile terminals than the ones currently used with the Regional BGAN service,

A scalable range of equipment providing various transfer rates (of up to 492 Kbit/s) suited to customers different needs,

Guaranteed QoS levels.

Ultimately, this mobile Internet service offering worldwide coverage will

help increase user numbers (NGOs, media, army, oil & gas, mining) and attract new customers seeking a solution combining broadband and mobility.

Reminder of 2005 key dates linked to BGAN launch

11 March: launch of the first 4th generation Inmarsat satellite and the first IP session established between the Inmarsat terrestrial station and an external PoP operated by France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications

July: migration of Regional BGAN traffic onto the first Inmarsat 4 (I4) satellite

August: France Telecom Mobile Satellite Communications will begin marketing the Regional BGAN service on the new I4 satellite (coverage extended to Asia, Australia and South Africa)

October: launch of the second I4 satellite (covering the Americas and the Atlantic Ocean)

November: commercial launch of the BGAN providing transfer rates of up to 492 Kbit/s

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