

ASTRA satellite ready for Thursday launch

April 19 2006

SES ASTRA's latest telecom satellite was on track for its scheduled Thursday launch from Cape Canaveral in the United States.

The ASTRA-1KR spacecraft will provide direct-to-home broadcast services in Europe for the Luxembourg operator for the next 15 years.

ASTRA-1KR is the first of two Lockheed Martin A2100 satellites to be delivered to SES ASTRA this year and the 29th A2100 delivered to satellite operators worldwide, Lockheed said Wednesday.

The bird is equipped with 32 Ku-band transponders and will operate from a position at 19.2 degrees east.

ASTRA has a fleet of 13 satellites that transmit more than 1,600 analog, radio and digital television signals as well as Internet and multi-media services. The newest satellite will primarily replace the ASTRA 1B and 1C spacecraft.

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