Ariane 5 places Japan, Australia satellites in orbit

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This picture released by European Space Agency on August 21, shows the launching of Europe's Spaceport Ariane 5 rocket in Kourou, French Guyana. The rocket successfully placed communications satellites into geostationary orbit for Japan's SKY Perfect JSAT Corporation and Australian operator Optus.

An Ariane 5 rocket successfully placed communications satellites into geostationary orbit on Friday for Japan's SKY Perfect JSAT Corporation and Australian operator Optus, according to Arianespace.

The dual payload lifted off from the Arianespace launch site in Kourou, French Guiana at 2209 GMT.

Weighing some 4,000 kilos (8,800 pounds), the JSAT satellite will provide communication services for Japan, the Asia-Pacific region, Oceania and Hawaii. It was built by US company Lockheed Martin, and

is designed to last 15 years.

The 2,500-kilo (5,500-pound) Optus will be the fifth satellite hoisted into orbit for the Australian operator will provide direct TV and broadcasting services for Australia and New Zealand.

Made by Orbital Science Corporation in Dulles, Virginia, it too is made to function for a decade-and-a-half.

The launch was the 190th mission completed by Ariane rockets, and the 46th by the current generation of Ariane 5 rockets.

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