

Meteosat Third Generation development to start

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Meteosat Third Generation imager and sounder

Marking a significant milestone for Europe's next fleet of meteorological satellites, ESA has given the go-ahead to Thales Alenia Space in France to start work on developing the Meteosat Third Generation.

The 'Preliminary Authorisation To Proceed' was signed today after a kick-off meeting between ESA and Thales Alenia [Space](#). This approval follows several months of negotiations that has resulted in a final industrial team of Thales Alenia Space (FR) and the initial consortium members, OHB (DE) and Kayser Threde (DE), together with, in a range of complementary functions, Astrium (DE/FR).

Formal introduction of Astrium into the consortium will take place over

the next six months.

Following on from Meteosat Second Generation, the Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) is being created through cooperation between Eumetsat and ESA to ensure continuity of high-resolution meteorological data to beyond 2037.

This next series of geostationary weather satellites will be a step change by providing significant improvements over the capabilities of the current Meteosat generation.

The series will comprise six satellites: four MTG-I imaging and two MTG-S sounding satellites. The two types will be positioned over the same longitude in their geostationary orbits.

The sounding element, which also carries the Sentinel-4 [payload](#) for the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security programme as a guest payload, is a key innovation. For the first time, [Meteosat](#) satellites will not only image weather systems, but also analyse the atmosphere layer by layer and provide deeper insight into the complexities of its chemical composition.

The first MTG-I satellite is expected in late 2017, with the first MTG-S following in early 2019.

Provided by European Space Agency

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