

## Second launch this year for Ariane 5

March 25 2014

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Ariane liftoff on flight VA216. Credit: Arianespace

An Ariane 5 launcher lifted off from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana on its mission to place two telecom satellites, Astra-5B and Amazonas-4A, into their planned transfer orbits.

Liftoff of flight VA216 occurred at 22:04 GMT (23:04 CET; 19:04 French Guiana). The target geostationary transfer orbit had a perigee altitude of 250 km, an apogee altitude of 35 736 km and an inclination

of  $3^\circ$  to the equator.

Astra-5B, with a [launch](#) mass of 5755 kg and mounted on top of Ariane's Sylda dual payload adapter, was the first to be released 27 minutes into the mission.

Following a series of burns controlled by Ariane's onboard computer, the Sylda structure encasing the co-passenger, Amazonas-4A, was released and jettisoned. Amazonas-4A, with a launch mass of 2938 kg, was delivered into its own transfer orbit about 7 minutes and 30 seconds after Astra-5B.

Astra-5B, owned and operated by SES in Luxembourg, will be positioned at  $31.5^\circ\text{E}$  longitude in [geostationary orbit](#) to provide direct-to-home television broadcast, cable distribution and digital terrestrial television (DTTV) network services in Europe. It also hosts an L-band payload for Europe's EGNOS navigation system. The satellite has a design life of about 15 years.

Amazonas-4A, owned by Hispasat in Spain, will be positioned at  $61^\circ\text{W}$  longitude in geostationary orbit to provide a broad range of telecommunications services across South America, and has a design life of 15 years.

The payload mass for this launch was 9468 kg. The satellites totalled 8662 kg, with [payload](#) adapters and carrying structures making up the rest.

Flight VA216 was the 73rd Ariane 5 launch.

Provided by European Space Agency

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