



AMSAT®

The Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation

NEWS RELEASE

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PHASE 3-D LAUNCH NOW SET FOR JULY, 1997

SILVER SPRING, MD (AMSAT News Service)--A published report released on Tuesday, December 17th by the European Space Agency (ESA) has shed new light on the planned launch date for AMSAT's Phase 3-D International satellite aboard the next flight of the Ariane 5 booster, Ariane 502.

Following a plan of action set in motion last September among ESA, the French Space Agency (CNES) and the firms concerned in building the rocket, a detailed timetable for operations leading up to Ariane flight 502 has now been established by these organizations.

ESA reports that, while each individual operation will require very close analysis, the Ariane 502 launch campaign is now scheduled to begin on Wednesday April 9th, 1997, with the launch itself now planned for early July.

Given these dates, the last qualification launch of the Ariane 5, Ariane 503, managed by ArianeSpace, has now been scheduled for November 1997.

AMSAT-NA President Bill Tynan W3XO welcomed the news saying that, "It gives us a definite goal to shoot for in our preparations of the Phase 3-D spacecraft, however every month the launch is pushed back means more funds are needed." Bill noted that a letter is currently going out to all AMSAT-NA members asking for additional contributions to the Project. He emphasized that, "It is particularly important to the successful completion and launch of Phase 3-D that recipients of this letter respond as generously as they can."

(more)

AMSAT is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) educational and scientific organization that was first chartered in Washington, DC, USA. Its objectives include promoting space research and communication by building, launching and controlling Amateur Radio spacecraft. Since its founding, over 25 years ago, many other like-minded organizations have been formed around the world to pursue the same goals and who now also share the AMSAT name. Often acting together, these groups have used predominantly volunteer labor and donated resources to design, construct and, with the added assistance of government and commercial space agencies, successfully launch, over two dozen Amateur Radio communications satellites into Earth orbit.

The Phase 3-D satellite, now under construction with the help of over a dozen AMSAT groups on five continents, will be the largest, most complex, and most expensive Amateur Radio satellite ever built.

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