

# In-Orbit Validation Contract for Galileo

The Galileo project is now well and truly taking shape, with the signing of a second contract concerning the In-Orbit Validation phase, following that signed in July 2003 for two test satellites.

The European Space Agency (ESA) and Galileo Industries have signed a E150m contract, as a first stage towards signing an approximately E950m contract, covering the overall IOV phase.

The contract provides the basis and the technical activities necessary for in-orbit validation of the Galileo system. It gives preliminary authorization to proceed with the whole of this work, over a six-month period. This work notably concerns the management of the programme and the choice of engineering systems and technical support required to maintain the overall credibility of the scheduling and ensure system coherence.

In-orbit validation involves the delivery of the first four satellites in the Galileo constellation of 30, along with a number of ground stations. Subsequently, the programme will enter its deployment phase, which will cover the entire network of ground infrastructure and the launch of the remaining 26 satellites which will complete the constellation.

At present, the test phase has started, with the launch of a first test satellite onboard a Soyuz launcher expected by the end of 2005. To ensure that this phase is a success, two satellites are being built in parallel by European industry.

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