

Press Information

Continuous Progress in Commercial Earth Observation

- German radar satellite TerraSAR-X completes second year in orbit
- Infoterra GmbH establishes solid position in global market for Earth observation data and services

Friedrichshafen, 15 June 2009 – The German radar satellite TerraSAR-X celebrates the completion of its second year in space; commercial business operations have been ongoing since early 2008, and the German Astrium subsidiary Infoterra GmbH, owner of the commercial exploitation rights, has successfully established a solid position in the global market for Earth observation data and services.

Nikolaus Faller, Chief Operations Officer of Infoterra, reports the reach of 'break even' in 2008, the first year of TerraSAR-X operations – and that the company's future looks promising: "A continuously growing number of users around the globe are convinced of the unique advantages TerraSAR-X has to offer: The radar sensors' weather independence guarantees extremely reliable acquisitions, further, users appreciate the precision of the satellite. Just recently, the US National Geospatial Intelligence Agency NGA has officially confirmed the outstanding geolocation accuracy of our data."

Facts and figures support this: more than 22,000 scenes have been acquired over recent months, 50+ partners in 33 countries apply and distribute the data, innovative geo-information products and services are currently being tested and validated in 80+ pilot studies, and at the German Infoterra sites in Friedrichshafen and Potsdam, more than 80 new jobs have been created since the TerraSAR-X launch. Thus, the concept of creating Infoterra in order to consolidate the use of Earth observation data beyond pure scientific applications into commercial markets, proves to be sustainable.

Clients from private industry as well as the public sector around the globe are buying data products as well as the resulting geo-information services. Large-scale topographic and thematic mapping, especially in equatorial regions, relies on cloud-independent radar data. Surface movements in urban areas as well as for exploration projects are monitored in sub-centimeter detail. Change detection applications and targeted surveillance support national and international intelligence and security tasks. Following natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, around the world, TerraSAR-X based rapid maps have supported crisis response and humanitarian aid.

"In the future, TanDEM-X will enable us to solidify our unique market position even further, as we will also conduct the commercial exploitation of this data exclusively," Faller is looking forward to the TerraSAR-X "twin": The satellite constellation will deliver data for a global digital elevation model of an unprecedented quality, accuracy and coverage.

About Infoterra

Infoterra is a leading provider of geo-information products and services for managing the development, environment and security of our changing world. With entities in France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and the United Kingdom, its customers include international corporations, governments and authorities around the globe, and organisations such as the European Commission (EC) and the European Space Agency (ESA).

Infoterra operates across a comprehensive range of markets - telecommunications, environment, security, agriculture, defence, oil & gas exploration and many more.

Furthermore, Infoterra holds the exclusive commercial exploitation rights for the high-resolution radar satellite TerraSAR-X, and plays a leading role in geo-information services within the European GMES initiative of the EC and ESA.

Infoterra is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Europe's leading space company Astrium, and, together with Spot Image, forms the Earth Observation Division of Astrium Services

About TerraSAR-X

The TerraSAR-X Earth observation satellite is a joint venture being carried out under a public-private-partnership between the German Aerospace Center DLR and EADS Astrium GmbH. At DLR, a team of four institutes is responsible for implementing the mission in collaboration with the space agency. EADS Astrium GmbH developed, built and launched the satellite; the exclusive commercial exploitation rights are held by the geo-information service provider Infoterra GmbH. TerraSAR-X was launched on June 15th, 2007 and has been in operational service since January 2008.

TerraSAR-X Image Gallery

<http://www.infoterra.de/image-gallery/images.html>

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