

EUSPA entrusts CNES with the responsibility of providing and maintaining the SAR-Galileo services for the next 10 years

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On Thursday 19 January 2023, CNES and EUSPA signed a framework contract confirming the European Union Space Programme Agency's (EUSPA) intention to entrust CNES once again with the responsibility of providing the SAR-Galileo services, maintaining the assets in operational condition, coordinating with the host sites and interfacing with the Cospas-Sarsat community. With a total budget of almost 137 million euros for 10 years, the framework contract foresees the introduction of specific contracts linked to SAR-Galileo developments, the initial one set at just over 48 million euros for 5 years.

Since 2016, CNES is in charge of the operations of the SAR-Galileo services for the European Union, providing the SAR-Galileo Forward Link Service (FLS) and the SAR-Galileo Return Link Service (RLS). The coordination of operations and maintenance of the ground segment deployed across Europe is therefore ensured from the space centre in Toulouse. A network of reference beacons allows evaluation of the performance of the systems in real-time.

In addition, CNES also provides its expertise to EUSPA for the definition of international standards, performance monitoring and future developments.

The upcoming EPIRB-based services will lead to a significant change in the scope of the project. In particular, CNES has already been identified as the future operator of the Emergency Warning Service, an emergency alert service for communities that is scheduled to begin operations in 2024. This consolidates the position of CNES as an historical player in search and rescue activities. Some evolutions in this regard are already planned in the scope of the framework contract with EUSPA.

About the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA)

The European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) provides safe and secure European satellite navigation services, promotes the commercialization of Galileo, EGNOS, and Copernicus data and services and coordinates the EU's forthcoming governmental satellite communications programme GOVSATCOM. EUSPA is responsible for the security accreditation of all the EU Space Programme components. By fostering the development of an innovative and competitive space sector and engaging with the entire EU Space community, EUSPA contributes to the European Green Deal and digital transition, the safety and security of the Union and its citizens, while reinforcing its autonomy and resilience.

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