

PRESS RELEASE

Galileo Precursor EGNOS Offers Accuracy and Integrity

Wanted: application ideas for EGNOS, the satellite-based system enhancement for GPS

Oberpfaffenhofen, 17.07.2008 – The European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) improves the accuracy of the U.S. satellite navigation system GPS to one to three metres and provides integrity signals GPS is not capable of alone. Thanks to this integrity, users can be constantly aware of whether transmitted signals can be trusted.

Europe is waiting for Galileo, but until it reaches full operational capability in 2013, EGNOS will be paving the way for the continent's future satellite navigation system. With a network of ground stations and three geostationary satellites, EGNOS delivers augmentation signals for the existing satellite navigation system, GPS. This enables European companies to use the existing navigation signals much more quickly and extensively for commercial purposes and is particularly crucial to "safety-of-life" applications.

EGNOS can, for example, see use in air and sea navigation or road and railway transportation. It also makes satellite navigation possible in the field of air traffic, thereby improving airspace usage efficiency and safety in plane landings. In rail transport, automatic on-board positioning systems based on satellite navigation go even beyond optimisation: they considerably reduce the risk of accidents in cases of poor visibility and other circumstances. At sea, navigation of ships in narrow canals is just one of the new potential uses. EGNOS is also suitable for use in sport and everyday life: in fact, the Tour de France keeps track of its riders using the European reference service.

To increase public awareness of EGNOS and its merits and emphasise the system's market potential, the European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA) is sponsoring a special prize for the first time as part of the European Satellite Navigation Competition 2008. The GSA is looking for original, innovative, and market-ready ideas that take advantage of the special characteristics of EGNOS – integrity and improved accuracy compared to GPS. The authority's aim is to promote rapid development of new EGNOS-based applications. "We believe now is the time for innovators and entrepreneurs to seize this opportunity," says GSA executive director Pedro Pedreira.

By offering its special prize, the GSA hopes to help the ideas submitted to reach market readiness. The winner will have the chance to work toward this goal with the support of a European incubation centre of its choice for up to 12 months.

Solutions can be submitted from all over the world at www.galileo-masters.com until 31 July.

And let's not forget Galileo, which has been generating plenty of optimism. "The European Union stands without question behind Galileo; this means once and for all that Europe's global satellite navigation system is and will remain on the right track," says Pedreira.

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Note: Additional information on EGNOS and Galileo is available at www.gsa.europa.eu and www.esa.int/esaNA

Image material: <http://www.esa.int/esa-mm/mmg.pl?mission=EGNOS&type=I>

Information on the European Satellite Navigation Competition

The European Satellite Navigation Competition is an international innovation competition that awards the best ideas for innovative applications in the field of satellite navigation. Organised annually since 2004 by Anwendungszentrum GmbH Oberpfaffenhofen and SYSTEMS, the ESNC is oriented toward companies, entrepreneurs, research institutes, universities, and private individuals. Since its inception, the competition has grown from including three partner regions to 13 high-tech regions of Europe: Bavaria, Hesse, Baden-Württemberg, Nice / Sophia Antipolis, Prague, South Holland, Madrid, Lombardy, Great Britain, and this year's new regions, Queensland / Australia, Taipei / Taiwan, Lower Saxony, and North Rhine-Westphalia.

The goal of the ESNC is to continue to strengthen the international collaboration of these regions, particularly with regard to the development of applications and services made possible by the European satellite navigation system Galileo. The ESNC is carried out under the patronage of the Bavarian State Ministry for Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport, and Technology with the support of the German Aerospace Center (DLR).

The overall winner – the GALILEO Master – will be awarded along with the special prize winners and the 13 regional winners on October 21, 2008 at a state reception to be held at the Munich Residenz. They will also have the chance to present their ideas and applications to a wide audience of ICT decision-makers from October 21-24 at this year's SYSTEMS trade show in Munich.