

DIRECTION DES RELATIONS EXTÉRIEURES ET DE LA COMMUNICATION

Dassault Aviation and the S3 project

Saint-Cloud (France), March 13, 2013 - Today in Payerne, Swiss Space Systems (S3) unveiled its space shuttle project for placing small satellites (up to 250 kg) into low Earth orbit (altitudes of 600-800 km) at a cost well below current market rates. The first test launches will take place by 2017.

Dassault Aviation is pleased to contribute to the S3 project as part of a Swiss and international cooperation involving such competent and prestigious partners as the European Space Agency (ESA), the Von Karman Institute, Sonaca, Meggitt and Stanford University.

Swiss Space Systems will benefit from our company's know-how in the design of aerospace vehicles and the integration of complex systems. The S3 project is based on the VEHRA concept (Véhicule Hypersonique Réutilisable Aéroporté - airborne reusable hypersonic vehicle) developed by Dassault Aviation and equipped with a rocket engine and equipment from modern aircraft such as the Rafale or the Falcon business jets. It borrows from the space and aeronautical domains to propose a system that is robust, flexible and safe.

The S3 project illustrates the unwavering determination of Dassault Aviation to remain a major player in outstanding aeronautical challenges by preparing the future of aerospace transport. It also illustrates the continuity of activities within our company. Since the early 1960s, our design offices have performed numerous studies of spaceships and reusable launchers. The heritage of the Hermes orbital plane (83-93) enabled us to make significant progress in key space technologies and to be selected to work with NASA on the X-38 program (1995-2002), a vehicle project designed to rescue astronauts from the ISS in the event of an emergency. Dassault Aviation has also worked extensively on airborne launch systems, based on solutions using the Rafale as a carrier for micro-launchers, or involving larger platforms (Airbus A300) with the VEHRA concept from which the S3 project is directly derived.

At the same time, a strong aeronautical relationship has been established between Switzerland and Dassault Aviation. A relationship which started in the 1960s with the Mirage III, in service until 2003, and which has been fortified over the last 10 years by numerous cooperative undertakings with Swiss industry and universities. Examples include the European unmanned combat aircraft demonstrator Neuron, developed in partnership with RUAG, the Solar Impulse solar-powered aircraft for which we have provided support from the outset, or the K1000 project to examine the feasibility of a suborbital vehicle in collaboration with the Swiss polytechnic schools and which gave birth to the S3 concept.

About Dassault Aviation

With more than 8,000 military and civil aircraft delivered to 75 countries over the past 60 years, and having logged nearly 20 million flight hours to date, Dassault Aviation can offer recognized know-how and experience in the design, development, sale and support of all types of aircraft, from the Rafale fighter to the Falcon range of high-end business jets. Dassault Aviation's unique experience as architect of complex airborne systems ideally positions it to offer strategic expertise, innovative operational solutions and an efficient approach to cooperation.

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Press contacts:

Dassault Aviation, corporate communication

Stéphane Fort

Tel.: +33 (0)1 47 11 86 90

www.dassault-aviation.com

Twitter: @Dassault_OnAir