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## **SATELLITES TO THE RESCUE FOR THE 2008 HURRICANE SEASON**

**Washington, DC, September 12, 2008**— The nation's satellite companies rallied to provide emergency and public safety organizations with critical communications via satellite before, during and immediately following the landfall of Gustav and Hanna, and in preparation for Hurricane Ike. Intense planning, cooperation, and hard work undertaken since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 have resulted in improved interoperability among the federal, state, and local resources responding to the hurricanes, especially where the terrestrial networks were congested or damaged. Satellite television providers ensured that Gulf Coast viewers were armed with up-to-date storm information and specialized support.

**Mobile Satellite Venture's** Gulf States Mutual Aid Radio Talkgroup (G-SMART), a two-way radio communications service via MSV's satellite, linked federal, state, and local agencies throughout a five-state region, including Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In addition, public safety personnel in the Gulf States were able to conduct interoperable communications with MSV's nationwide SMART talkgroup, managed by the Department of Justice, as well as the neighboring 12-state Southeast SMART talkgroup. The MSV emergency communications team worked to activate new equipment and provide "loaner" terminals, program critical talkgroups to responder's MSV devices, and conducted long-distance refresher training in MSV satellite communications.

**Iridium Satellite LLC** reported traffic on its satellite network more than doubling once news alerts of the hurricanes began appearing. Hundreds of subscriber made calls on the Iridium network to test their equipment or to conduct mission-critical operations in areas affected by the recent storms. The company shipped 5,000 phones to service providers for new subscribers in the past two weeks, with the majority going to partners serving the Gulf Coast. The company is also working proactively with its more than 175 distribution partners, as well as with the U.S. Coast Guard and other emergency response customers, to ensure the availability of its devices and services during this busy hurricane season. The Department of Defense furnished Iridium satellite phones to military units preparing for response activities in the Gulf Region.

**SES Americom, Inc.** provided satellite capacity and services to major television networks and public broadcasters, and worked to prepare reserve capacity should terrestrial telecommunications operators' networks be incapacitated. Pre-positioned SES REDiSats, a removable and easily-deployable antenna and IP network developed post-Katrina for emergency and disaster situations, have been activated by commercial users in the Gulf Region. This has allowed key financial institutions in the area to continue service despite losing their primary terrestrial communications links.

**DIRECTV, Inc.** has established a dedicated 24/7 Emergency Information Network to provide Gulf Coast residents with storm-tracking maps, evacuation routes, shelter locations and contact information, as well as information on relief organizations for those who would like to offer their support. Additionally, the company is routing customer calls from affected areas to special Customer Care teams. DIRECTV has extra technicians to accommodate the anticipated volume of orders once areas hit by the storms are re-opened to residents, and the company's call center partner, N.E.W., is prepared for an influx of re-installation calls from Protection Plan customers. DIRECTV is also making special billing consideration for customers in affected areas.

**DataPath, Inc.**-provided Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC) trailers ensured the U.S. Army National Guard an advanced satellite-enabled communications network for rapid deployment anywhere in the U.S., even where the infrastructure is severely damaged. Thirty-two such trailers have been delivered for the National Guard's nationwide disaster response command and control capabilities. The JISCC trailers integrate secure satellite and wireless communications, land mobile radios, voice-over-IP telephones, and video teleconferencing for a complete, self-contained solution. In the past weeks, DataPath has also provided training and checked equipment for a Satellite Transportable Terminal pre-positioned by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. The mobile, towable terminal gives Georgia's emergency first responders the ability to establish high-bandwidth connectivity for command and control communications anywhere in a disaster area.

SIA is a U.S.-based trade association providing worldwide representation of the leading satellite operators, service providers, manufacturers, launch services providers, remote sensing operators, and ground equipment suppliers. SIA is the unified voice of the U.S. satellite industry on policy, regulatory, and legislative issues affecting the satellite business. SIA Executive Members include: Arrowhead Global Solutions, Inc.; Artel Inc.; The Boeing Company; DataPath, Inc.; The DIRECTV Group; Hughes Network Systems LLC; ICO Global Communications; Integral Systems, Inc.; Intelsat, Ltd.; Iridium Satellite LLC; Lockheed Martin Corp.; Loral Space & Communications Inc.; Mobile Satellite Ventures LP; Northrop Grumman Corporation; SES Americom, Inc.; and TerreStar Networks Inc. Associate Members include: ATK Inc.; Comtech EF Data Corp.; EchoStar Corporation; EMC Inc.; Eutelsat Inc.; Inmarsat Inc.; Marshall Communications Corp.; New Skies Satellites, Inc.; Spacecom Ltd.; Spacenet Inc.; Stratos Global Corp; SWE-DISH Satellite Systems; Telesat Corp., XTAR, LLC and WildBlue Communications, Inc. Additional information can be found at [www.sia.org](http://www.sia.org).

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