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Oggetto : NEW LAUNCH SERVICE CONTRACTS  
FOR VEGA C AND NEW DEVELOPMENT  
ACTIVITIES

*Testo del comunicato*

Vedi allegato.



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## **NEW LAUNCH SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR VEGA C AND NEW DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

**Rome, 20 January 2022** – At the end of an intense 2021 with 3 successful Ariane and 3 successful Vega missions in about 6 months, Avio announces the signature by Arianespace of several new launch service contracts for Vega C, whose maiden flight is now expected in May 2022.

In particular, between the end of December 2021 and the beginning of January 2022, a contract was signed with the Italian Space Agency for the launch of Platino 1 and Platino 2 satellites between 2022 and 2024. Platino is a lightweight advanced satellite platform entirely developed and manufactured in Italy, which will be able to serve future customers in a wide range of missions.

In addition, the Microcarb and NESS launch service contracts were signed with CNES, the French Space Agency, and ESA. Microcarb is a micro-satellite for measurement of CO<sub>2</sub> absorption and release into the atmosphere. NESS is a Nanosat demonstrator mission to perform surveillance of the civilian radiofrequency spectrum against jamming. Both Microcarb and NESS will be rideshare passengers on Vega C.

Finally, the launch service contracts for the Flex and Altius satellites were signed with the European Space Agency for a launch by 2025. Flex will provide mapping services of vegetation fluorescence to monitor carbon cycles and agriculture for food security, while Altius will monitor the status of the atmosphere ozone layer.

These contracts highlight the credibility of Avio's execution capability and Vega's restored track record of performance.

These missions also highlight on one side the suitability of Vega C to meet an ample spectrum of customer requirements and on the other side the commitment of Avio to support sustainability and improvement of life on earth through the most innovative space applications.

In addition to new launch contracts, Avio signed with ESA in December 2021 a new development contract for Vega C for a total value of about 50 Euro million. Such program will enable further Vega C technological optimizations and industrial streamlining, resulting in improved cost competitiveness.

In December 2021 Avio completed the full integration of the new M10 Lox-methane upper stage engine system which will power Vega E, whose maiden flight is expected in 2026. The engine has now been transferred to Avio's SPTF (Space Propulsion Test Facility) in Sardinia to start test campaigns as early as February 2022. This engine represents a breakthrough in performance and environmental suitability for upper stage propulsion systems and represents an important building block for Avio's future technology roadmap. In 2022 one additional test engine will be integrated to extend the test campaign envelope.

The Maiden Flights of Vega C and Ariane 6 are scheduled in May 2022 and in the second part of 2022 respectively, with the Avio team currently in French Guyana working on the final preparation steps. Most Vega C flight items are already at the launch site and commissioning of the new Control System is underway. The launch integration campaign is expected to start in the month of February.

The last few months of the year 2021 were characterized by an unexpected and generalized sharp increase in energy costs across Europe. Such increase is also expected to affect 2022. In this regard, Avio promptly reacted to through a new partnership with Cogenio-Enel X for the management of the power plant of Colferro.

*"The contracts signed between the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022 confirm the intense work carried out by the Avio team, which has led to renewed market confidence in the Vega launchers. With the shipment of the Vega C items to French Guyana, the launch campaign is nearing kick off, for the launch scheduled in May 2022, while also Ariane 6 is now getting very close to launch in the second part of 2022"* commented **Giulio Ranzo, CEO of Avio**.

#### **For further information:**

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#### **Avio in short**

Avio is a leading international group engaged in the construction and development of space launchers and solid and liquid propulsion systems for space travel. The experience and know-how built up over more than 50 years puts Avio at the cutting-edge of the space launcher sector, solid, liquid and cryogenic propulsion and tactical propulsion. Avio operates in Italy, France and French Guyana with 5 facilities, employing approx. 1,000 highly-qualified personnel, of which approx. 30% involved in research and development. Avio is a prime contractor for the Vega programme and a sub-contractor for the Ariane programme, both financed by the European Space Agency ("ESA"), placing Italy among the limited number of countries capable of producing a complete spacecraft.

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