

SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (D2)
Launch services, Missions, Operations and Facilities (2)

Author: Mrs. Caroline Arnoux
Arianespace, France, c.arnoux@arianespace.com

VEGA LAUNCH SERVICES FOR SMALL SATELLITE PROGRAMS

Abstract

From 2011, the Arianespace launcher family will grow with the addition of Vega, the new light vehicle that will enter operational service at the European Spaceport in French Guiana. Joining the European fleet of launchers with Ariane 5 and Soyuz, Vega is designed to provide adequate launch opportunities for smaller payloads, including mini and micro satellites.

This paper first addresses the major role to be played by Vega in ensuring an affordable access to space for a wide range of small missions, keeping in mind that the smaller spacecraft can nowadays achieve complete ambitious missions and should therefore be offered dedicated services instead of being required to fly as secondary payloads.

As an illustration of this concept, the foreseen configurations and missions for the five flights following the maiden launch are detailed and the Vega market is presented.

The flexibility of the vehicle, fitted to cover a wide range of missions, is demonstrated through the presentation of the analyses performed by Arianespace for these specific missions as well as for potential subsequent missions.

Finally, the Arianespace management of the Vega operations in synergy with Ariane 5 and Soyuz is presented. It is shown that a consistent and standard approach for the three launch systems will be implemented, thus improving quality and efficiency thanks to other launchers experience.