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OBJECTIVE TO ORBIT

Aerospacelab High-level procurement plan

IRIS² LEO High

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1 Introduction

In order to ensure sovereign access to secure and high-speed connectivity, the European Commission (EC) has set-up the IRIS² program. IRIS² (Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite) is a multi-orbit constellation program split across

- Low Earth Orbit High (LEO-High) (~270 satellites)
- Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) (~20 satellites)

All satellites should be launched and fully operational by 2030.

To ensure the definition, delivery and operation of IRIS², the EC awarded the Concession Agreement, on 31 October 2024, to the SpaceRISE consortium (consisting of Eutelsat S.A., Hispasat S.A., and SES Astra). On 12 December 2024, SpaceRISE signed a Concession Agreement with the EC and an ESA Partnership Project Contract (ESA PP Contract) with ESA.

In order to select the satellite prime for the LEO-High segment, SpaceRISE has launched competitive dialogues with Airbus Defence and Space S.A.S. and AEROSPACELAB S.A. ("ASL" or "Aerospacelab").

According to the IRIS² Regulation¹:

"For contracts above EUR 10 million, the contracting authority shall ensure that at least 30 % of the value of the contract is subcontracted by competitive tendering at various levels of subcontracting to companies outside the group of the prime tenderer, in particular in order to enable the cross-border participation of SMEs in the space ecosystem."

In addition, pursuant to the ESA PP Contract, unless otherwise authorised by ESA, all Subcontractors shall be selected in competition.

In order to ensure the widest participation from the European industry to the Program, the section below is intended to provide transparency regarding the anticipated procurements to be launched by Aerospacelab for the LEO-High scope.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/588 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2023 establishing the Union Secure Connectivity Programme for the period 2023-2027, OJ L 79, 17.3.2023, p. 1.

2 Procurement process

2.1 ASL contracts - LEO-High segment under the Concession Agreement scope

Aerospacelab will first initiate a round of RFI consultations which will not lead to any down-selection of potential suppliers.

The **RFI objectives** are to:

- Assess the technical maturity of the product and its compliance with IRIS² LEO-High needs
- Develop a first acceptance and qualification test strategy
- Submit a first development plan
 - o To demonstrate the product will reach the right technical maturity on time for the IRIS² program
 - o To identify the activities to be anticipated before PDR
- Receive **consolidated ROM pricing** per subsystem
- Consolidate production capacity per subsystem

After this RFI consultation phase, Aerospacelab will open *Competitive Tendering Processes* to select the suppliers who will provide flight subsystem for IRIS² LEO-High constellation. Under this RFP phase, Aerospacelab aims to receive binding offers to select the final supplier.

The main objectives of the **RFP** phase will be:

- To receive **Fix and Firm Price** for the full constellation
- To validate production capacity
- To validate acceptance and qualification plan
- To select the final supplier for all the subsystems listed below

The supplier selection will take place after the RFP phase (end of Q4 2025) but should be announced in Q1 2026.

The subsystems concerned by these RFI/RFP processes are listed in the next table.

	Function / Subsystem	RFI phase**		RFP phase**	
		Estimated Start date	Estimated End Date	Estimated Start date	Estimated End Date
Power	Solar Cells	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Solar Array Assembly (PVA + structure)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Solar Array Drive Mechanism (SADM)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Battery Modules (BM)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Harnessing	07/08/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
Propulsion	Thruster*	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	PPU	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	FCU	15/08/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Propellant	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Propellant Loading System	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Tank	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
AOCS	Reaction Wheels (RW)*	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Magneto Torquer (MTQ)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Star Tracker (ST)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Gyro	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Sun Sensor	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
Communication	GNSS Antenna	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Ka Band Antennas (Rx + Tx)	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Ka band Transceiver	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	OISL*	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
Thermal	MLI / Thermal Coating	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Heatpipe	15/08/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
	Deployable radiator	30/07/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025
Structure	Honeycomb Panels	15/08/2025	05/09/2025	20/09/2025	30/10/2025

* ASL will issue RFIs/RFPs only to cover recurring flight hardware for the constellation

**The list of subsystems and the start/end date of RFI/RFP are indicative only and can evolve

2.2 ESA PP contracts - LEO-High segment

Currently, Aerospacelab does not intend to initiate any procurement under the ESA PP Contract. Nonetheless, in order to secure the IRIS² LEO High planning, SpaceRISE has identified key subsystems that need to be de-risked now:

- Before the satellite prime is even selected
- Before the supplier is selected by the prime

The satellite subsystems concerned are:

- Optical Intersatellite Link (OISL)
- Hall Effect Thruster (HET)
- Reaction Wheels (RW)

for which the RFIs processes have already started – any questions in this regard shall be addressed to SpaceRISE.

This process will cover all development activities up to Qualification Model (QM) completion and is driven by SpaceRISE. However, this effort is supported by potential platform primes to ensure the specifications cover all needs of platform providers (based on the Baseline design presented by IRIS² LEO High potential platform primes).

Platform providers will be kept informed of the qualification progress and results.

2.3 How to apply ?

The announcements for the above-mentioned procurements will be published on the website of AEROSPACE LAB (<https://www.aerospacelab.com>) to ensure the widest participation of the European industry.

Economic operators interested to participate in any of the **RFI** process for the procurements mentioned above and fulfilling the Eligibility and Participation Conditions for IRIS² as set out in Article 22 of the IRIS² Regulation and further detailed in Section 5.1 of Phase I EU Tender Specifications,¹ are invited to express their interest by contacting iris2.leoh.procurement@aerospacelab.com with the following structure in the **email subject**:

[Subsystem you apply for] Company Name – Object of the email

Economic operators wishing to participate to any of the RFP processes listed above and fulfilling the Eligibility and Participation Conditions for IRIS² as set out in Article 22 of the IRIS² Regulation and further detailed in Section 5.1 of Phase I EU Tender Specifications,² shall notify their interest by contacting iris2.leoh.procurement@aerospacelab.com **starting from 5 September 2025 and at the latest by 20 September 2025 at 23:59 CET**. Passed that date, Aerospacelab will no longer accept any new economic operator to join the RFP process.

All the economic operators who marked their interest in the RFP phase will then receive the RFP documentation.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, please note that your personal data will be processed by Aerospacelab for the sole purpose of enabling your participation and choice in the framework of the RFIs and/or RFPs and to enable Aerospacelab to maintain the relationship arising from the RFIs and/or RFPs. Aerospacelab may disclose your personal data to the SpaceRISE Consortium and to authorities on request. To exercise your rights or request further information about how Aerospacelab processes your personal data, please:

- refer to the Aerospacelab privacy notice: <https://www.aerospacelab.com/privacy>
- contact gdpr@aerospacelab.com

¹ Available at the TED eTendering website: <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-display.html?cftId=13625>

² Available at the TED eTendering website: <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-display.html?cftId=13625>