



The Network Management Centre at MEASAT's MTBC.

# Measat expands regional coverage

In a recent visit to Measat's new satellite control centre in Cyberjaya, Malaysia, *APB* caught a glimpse of satellite-broadcast services broadcasters can expect in the near future.

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— Diego Sutachan, vice-president for sales and marketing, Measat

Malaysia-based Measat Satellite Systems is expanding from its traditional South-east Asian market, to serve the wider Asia-Pacific region. With a two regional communications satellite network providing satellite services across Asia, its customer base includes major telecom operators, broadcasters, direct-to-home (DTH) operators, and Internet service providers.

Diego Sutachan, Measat's vice-president for sales and marketing, said that the company has always taken an approach of business innovation and pragmatism. "The business is focused on always getting the basics in place," he said. "That means high-quality satellite links and responsive customer care."

Measat has the rights to operate satellites across 16 orbital slots around the world. Today, it operates at 91.5°E and 148°E.

With the completion of the Measat Teleport and Broadcast Centre (MTBC) last year, located just outside Kuala Lumpur, the company sees long-term advantages in re-locating both its technical and commercial operations to one location, bringing more cost savings and operational efficiencies.

MTBC works alongside Measat's existing satellite operations centre in Langkawi to provide fully-redundant satellite control facilities for the company's fleet of satellites. MTBC is designed as a fully-equipped customer teleport facility providing a complete range of uplinking, satellite and co-location services to

customers in the broadcast, telecom and IP sectors. It has access to contribution feeds from over 30 satellites across the region, fibre connectivity to key POPs (points of presence) in London, UK, and Los Angeles, USA.

MTBC also offers customers co-location space. The secure facility operates 24 hours a day, controlling the Measat fleet and providing customer support services, with the support of partners such as Astro (Malaysia) and PCM (Hong Kong).

Sutachan confirmed that Measat has introduced a range of customer satellite solutions through MTBC. This includes video services like video turnaround to/from satellite or fibre, video playout and occasional usage. MTBC is also able to support customers' VSAT hubs, IP POPs and data centres.

Measat is planning on launching Measat-3 in the near future. This new satellite will be co-located with Measat-1 at the prime broadcasting and DTH hot slot of 91.5°E. Designed as the region's best video-distribution platforms, Measat-3 will reach 70% of the world's population (over 100 countries) through a single high-powered beam.

Sutachan explained that Measat-3 has been ordered for two key purposes: For additional capacity and satellite redundancy. "Measat-1, our key broadcasting satellite, is already at 90-95% utilisation," he added.

Also, building new capacity at the same slot

allows customers to expand without having to invest in new ground installations.

As for the purpose of satellite redundancy, Sutachan said key DTH and broadcast customers are requesting satellite redundancy to provide protection of their business on the satellite.

Measat-3 will have three high-powered C-band beams, each designed for specific applications, combined reach and power, while focused Ku-band beams will provide DTH-quality capacity across South Asia, Indonesia and Malaysia.

One of the Asian clients who will be using Measat-3 is the Jia Yu channel. Measat is providing playout and distribution services to this regional Chinese-language news and entertainment channel from Jia Yu Home Entertainment, which is also a member of Malaysia's Cosmos Discovery, a company that provides a range of media services spanning from TV to movie production, channel licensing and syndicated network services. Currently distributed via Measat-1, the channel will move to Measat-3 when the latter is launched this year.

Another client that is using Measat's playout service is BBC Worldwide, the commercial consumer arm of the BBC, which launched two entertainment channels specially developed for Asia. Called BBC Prime and BBC Japan, they offer audiences in Asia the best of the BBC's entertainment programming.

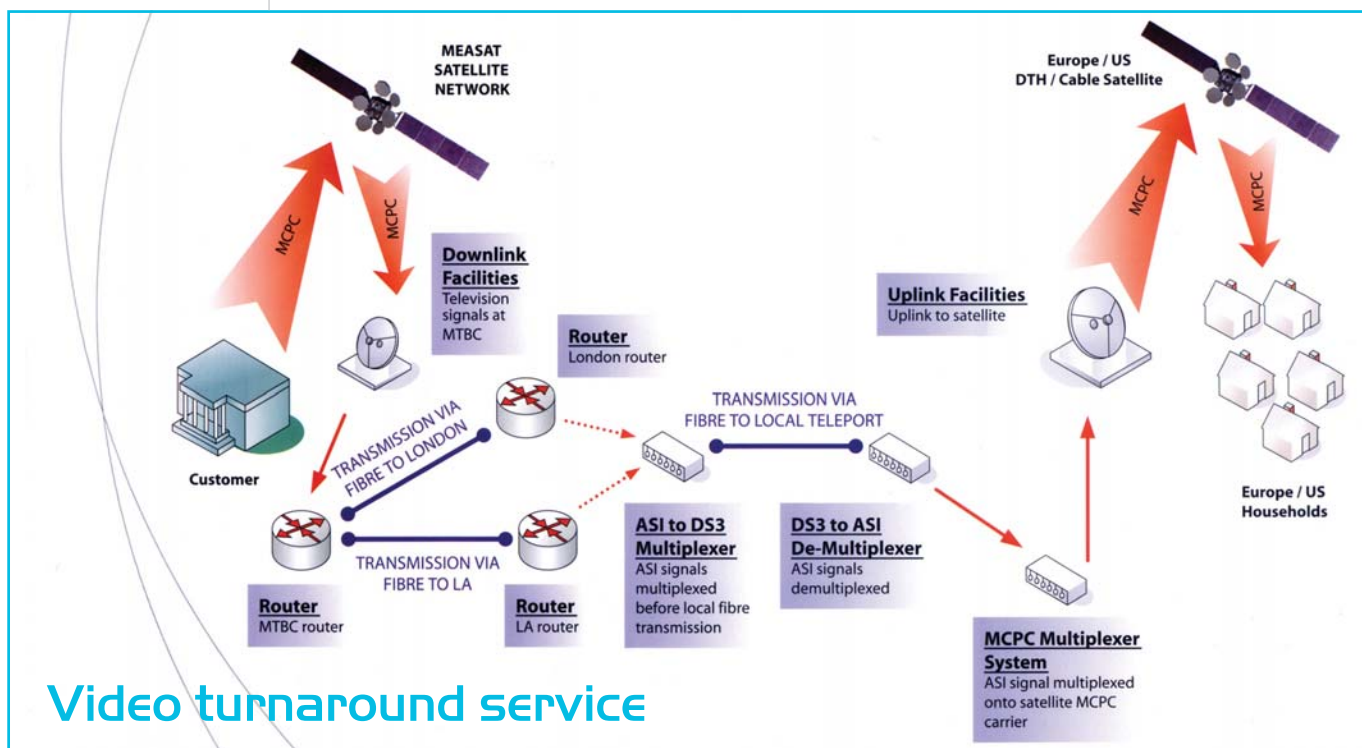
The BBC Prime feed is currently distributed through Measat-1. The channel will also transfer to Measat-3 after the satellite's launch.

In the Philippines, Measat is providing turnaround service to GMA Network for the broadcaster's international channel, which is distributed via Measat-2 and Measat's fibre connectivity to the US.

Solar Entertainment, a cable channel bouquet based in the Philippines, has recently signed an agreement for capacity on the Measat-1 satellite for the distribution of three additional TV channels: RPN-9, Crime N Suspense and ETC 2nd Avenue.

Currently, Measat also supports DTH platforms across a number of key markets like Malaysia (Astro), Vietnam (VTV) and Australia (CSTV). Sutachan said that another DTH platform for the region is in the pipeline, although he could not reveal more.

MEASAT is also in discussion with vendors for the procurement of a new Measat-1R satellite, which will be designed as a replacement spacecraft for Measat-1. This new satellite will be co-located with Measat-3 at 91.5°E. **APB**



Video turnaround service