The Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems

PRESS RELEASE

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CCSDS: International Space Communications Standards Organization Surpasses 300th Mission

WASHINGTON, August 11 (CCSDS Secretariat) – Today the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems (CCSDS) announced that more than 300 missions have elected to use the committee's internationally developed standards and protocols to enable reliable communications in space. And the number continues to rise.

Supported by NASA, the CCSDS is dedicated to furthering interoperability across the international space community through the development of standardized techniques for handling space data. Founded in 1982, the world's 10 major space agencies originally created the CCSDS as a forum to discuss common problems occurring in space communications. Since then, the organization has grown into an international working collaborative that includes the ten original member agencies, 22 observer agencies and over 100 industry associates worldwide. Industrial associates now develop compatible products to meet the requirements of CCSDS enabled missions and ground-support complexes.

"Since its inception, the CCSDS has operated mostly 'behind the scenes' to improve communications in space and to enable the build-up of reusable international mission support infrastructure," said Adrian Hooke of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), Pasadena, Calif., and a founder of the CCSDS. "To now know that over 300 missions have chosen to use CCSDS' communications protocols is truly an exciting milestone for this organization."

CCSDS standards and protocols reduce project costs, and enhance cross support, interoperability and data communications. Earlier this year, Proximity-1, a short-haul delivery protocol developed by the CCSDS, became the first standard space communications protocol able to reliably operate in the proximate environment between a Mars bound asset and an orbiter. In fact, for the past 15 years, virtually all deep spacecraft have implemented CCSDS standard data communications protocols on their long-haul links back to Earth.

The most widely used standards include CCSDS recommendations for exchange of spacecraft telemetry and telecommand information, including mechanisms for interconnecting ground stations, control centers and mission archives in support of data sharing. From the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory, the first mission to move towards adoption of CCSDS standards, and the International Space Station, the largest

international scientific project to date, to today's newsmaker Cassini-Huygens, missions worldwide have benefited from CCSDS collaboration. Yet despite increasing popularity, each carefully engineered CCSDS standard is available to the world free of charge.

"A high level of international cooperation and information sharing occurs throughout our membership," explained Dr. John D. Kelley of NASA Headquarters, Washington, D.C., and the CCSDS' General Secretary and Chairman of the Management Council. "It's been our key to success in developing the sort of high-quality standards and protocols that the space community regularly chooses to adopt."

The original national member space agencies represent Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Brazil, Russia, Canada and the United States, as well as the multi-national European Space Agency. A striking pathfinder of international cooperation in space, the CCSDS will continue to foster a collaborative environment and move forward in developing standards and protocols that enhance space communications for the world.

About the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems (CCSDS)

In 1982, the world's major space agencies recognized that future data system interoperability would be enhanced through the development of standardized techniques for handling space data and established the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems (CCSDS) as a forum where common space data system standards could be developed.

Over two decades later, CCSDS has grown into an organization of international cooperation and information-sharing comprised of ten member agencies, 22 observer agencies and over 100 private industry associates from around the world. Data communications protocols developed by CCSDS now fly on over 300 international missions, including every spacecraft associated with the Mars mission.

For more information about the CCSDS or to find CCSDS standards, please visit the CCSDS web site at http://www.ccsds.org.

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Contact for Members of the Press:
Penelope Wrenn Walz
CCSDS - Public Affairs
Greenbelt, Maryland USA
T - +1 301 474 5424
E - penelope.walz@btas.com