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SELEX Galileo increases its presence in the US Space market

SELEX Galileo's "A-STR" attitude sensor helps guide NASA's lunar survey craft to successful impact on the Moon

SELEX Galileo, of Finmeccanica, is a world leader in attitude sensors and has supplied these for use in hundreds of missions without a single failure in orbit. That is why NASA chose A-STR for the successful LCROSS mission aimed at determining if ice crystals are present on the Moon.

LCROSS is the Lunar Crater Observation and Sensor Satellite with a mission to confirm the presence or absence of water ice in a permanently shadowed crater at the Moon's South Pole.

More than 30 A-STR flight units have been delivered to customers all over the world. In the US, SELEX Galileo has a long established presence in the attitude sensors market, with a reputation for technological excellence. US customers for SELEX Galileo's Star Tracker include: Lockheed Martin, John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Northrop Grumman, NASA GSFC/AMES and JPL.

Recently, SELEX Galileo's A-STR attitude control sensors provided NASA's LCROSS with the correct orientation throughout its journey to the Moon. SELEX Galileo's sensors also guided the final stages of the LCROSS 'impacter' module's collision course, 'centring' with success the impact area of the Moon's surface on October 9 2009.

Other SELEX Galileo sensor successes include sensors flying on board STEREO, Phoenix Marslander, MESSENGER, Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, and on spinning spacecrafts such as PLUTO New Horizon.

The A-STR which, thanks to LCROSS, has become a "permanent feature" on the Moon qualified on-ground in 2001. Since then, more than sixty A-STR flight units have been ordered. Applications range from Earth Observation and Scientific spacecraft involving LEO, planetary and GEO orbits with a mission lifespan ranging up to 17 years.

Of the 47 star trackers built by SELEX Galileo and launched all are either still operating, or have performed the requisite mission. SELEX Galileo's Electro-Optical (EO) spacecraft attitude control sensor business has produced more than 400 sensors including star trackers, earth sensors (for long life commercial geo-sync communications satellites) and sun sensors. All of SELEX's instruments used in space flights have performed flawlessly.

Notes to the Editors:

The LRO spacecraft, which is currently orbiting around the Moon, collected additional scientific data during the LCROSS descent and impact. Two of SELEX Galileo's A-STR sensors are on board LRO and provide the spacecraft with an accurate orientation during the orbit.

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