PRESS RELEASE

Isar Aerospace secures first active debris removal mission with Astroscale

Munich, 16 March 2026 – Space company Isar Aerospace has signed a launch service agreement with Astroscale Ltd, the UK subsidiary of Astroscale Holdings Inc., to launch the 'ELSA-M' In-Orbit Demonstration (IOD) mission. This mission represents a major milestone for Astroscale's pioneering end-of-life removal services, and adds to Isar Aerospace's rapidly expanding launch manifest, underscoring the strong global demand for flexible launch from Europe and the trust customers worldwide have in the company's launch capabilities. The 'ELSA-M IOD' launch will mark a critical step toward commercial in-orbit servicing. As Isar Aerospace's first end-of-life mission, it demonstrates the company's ability to target specific orbits required for a rendezvous mission, meeting the unique requirements of customers worldwide.

"We are thrilled to partner with Astroscale. The 'ELSA-M' In-Orbit Demonstration mission will not only display the future of active debris removal in space, but already today shows why customers opt to launch with Isar Aerospace: We provide our customers with the flexibility to determine when their payloads are launched to a target orbit they require," says Stella Guillen, Chief Commercial Officer of Isar Aerospace. "This is our first involvement of active debris removal mission and we are proud to contribute to space sustainability by supporting Astroscale's pioneering activities."

The mission will be launched aboard Isar Aerospace's 'Spectrum' launch vehicle from the company's dedicated launch site at Andøya Space. The 'Spectrum' launcher is designed, built, and operated entirely in-house, utilizing a high degree of automation. This approach enables the company to scale manufacturing and meet surging global demand.

With this launch agreement, Isar Aerospace and Astroscale are further contributing to strengthening Europe's space capabilities. Astroscale is a global leader in in-orbit servicing, advancing its commercial end-of-life service through the 'ELSA-M IOD' mission. The company aims to secure a circular economy in space through missions that inspect, service and remove satellites. 'ELSA-M' will be the world's first commercial end-of-life service for prepared satellites, meaning satellites designed with technologies such as an interface that will enable docking and removal. Majority self-funded, Astroscale's 'ELSA-M' mission is supported by the UK Space Agency through the European Space Agency's programme of Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems (ARTES) as part of the Sunrise Partnership Project, a public–private partnership between ESA and Eutelsat. As part of this demonstration, Astroscale's 520kg 'ELSA-M' servicer spacecraft will capture and remove an end-of-life Eutelsat OneWeb satellite, advancing Astroscale's active debris removal (ADR) capabilities and contributing to sustainable space operations.

The ‘ELSA-M’ mission is a key step in Astroscale’s roadmap toward routine, scalable in-orbit services, enabling satellite operators to remove debris responsibly, support a sustainable space environment and contribute to the growth of a circular economy in space.

“ELSA-M is a major step forward for commercial end-of-life services, building on Astroscale’s flight-proven rendezvous and proximity operations capability,” says Nick Shave, Managing Director of Astroscale UK. “Through missions such as ELSA-d and ADRAS-J, we have demonstrated safe, controlled approaches and robust relative navigation – core skills that underpin responsible in-orbit servicing. With Isar Aerospace providing both launch flexibility and orbital precision that our rendezvous mission requires, we are ready to deliver an active debris removal service that will enable a more sustainable space environment and circular economy in space.”

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About Isar Aerospace

The European space company Isar Aerospace offers launch services for transporting small and medium-sized satellites and satellite constellations into Earth orbit. The launch vehicles used to transport these satellites are developed, manufactured, and tested almost entirely in-house. Headquartered near Munich, Germany, Isar Aerospace was founded in 2018 and has grown to over 400 employees, working across 5 international locations. Private funding from international investors provides strong backing for the company’s pioneering approach to scale and industrialize launch vehicle production through vertical integration. More information: www.isaraerospace.com

About Astroscale

Astroscale is the global leader in in-orbit servicing, dedicated to the safe and sustainable development of space. The company delivers a variety of innovative and scalable on-orbit servicing solutions, including life extension, in-situ space situational awareness, end-of-life, and active debris removal. Since its first successful launch in March 2021, Astroscale has proven rendezvous and proximity operations technologies in orbit during the ELSA-d and ADRAS-J missions. Astroscale spacecraft have been selected for pioneering missions with JAXA, the U.S. Space Force, the European Space Agency, the UK Space Agency, and Eutelsat. As more satellite operators adopt in-orbit servicing to routinely inspect, relocate, remove, and extend the life of spacecraft, the potential of a circular space economy — and a future of no waste in space — is being unlocked. Headquartered in Japan, Astroscale has a global presence with subsidiaries in the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and Israel. https://www.astroscale.com

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