

Bird & Bird Satellite Bulletin

December 2016

Goodbye Mercury 7 – Looking Forward to 2017

The last of the Mercury 7 astronauts, John Glenn, died on 8 December.

He will always be remembered as the first American to orbit the Earth during the new, challenging and dramatic days of the early 1960s when people were beginning to venture into space. He generated inspiration, determination, patriotism, faith and belief in innovation and technology.

His determination was even more inspiring when in 1998 he returned to orbit when 77 years old on space shuttle Discovery (Mission STS 95) - the last flight before the International Space Station was built.

From 1962 to 2016

As in 1962, the space sector in 2016 stimulates ambition in school children, encourages international cooperation and is a catalyst for scientific and engineering engagement.

The space sector in 2016 also inspires entrepreneurs, brings global connectivity and offers public services virtually world-wide and generates solutions to human challenges. In 2016, the space industry is no longer a quiet success story; the man on the Clapham omnibus now realises that his communications, banking services, GPS, weather forecasts and entertainment are driven by satellites. The finance world recognise that the space industry can generate valuable returns and we appreciate the value of the space industry in creating growth and employment.

2017 onwards

As 2017 dawns, the space industry faces several new challenges, which also bring opportunities: mega constellations; high-throughput satellites; low cost

access to space; sustainable access to spectrum; access to finance for innovative technologies; and many more.

One important challenge which must be addressed to ensure the continued growth of the industry is to reach out to other sectors to demonstrate the value of space technology, data, services and applications to them; sectors such as telemedicine; energy; mining; finance; insurance; shipping etc etc. Praise is due to the Satellite Applications Catapult for leading that charge.

2017 is the 60th anniversary of the launch of the first satellite - Sputnik. A year to look back and appreciate what the sector has achieved, further stimulate the growing space-enabled economy into other sectors and inspire more children to take up science, engineering and dream of being the next John Glenn.

Lets look forward to the next 60 years...

"Godspeed John Glenn".

Best wishes for the season and 2017

If you have any queries or would like to receive further information please contact:

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Bird & Bird's Satellite Group

Bird & Bird's satellite group are international specialists with a unique reputation and track record in the industry. Through many years of experience working in-house, at regulators, in international institutions (EC, ESA, ITU, UN) and in private practice, we have built an extensive footprint of expertise and knowledge. Possessing a genuine interest in the sector, our team assist clients in many areas including: regulatory advice, industry specific commercial contacts, competition, corporate, finance, dispute resolution, employment, and insurance.

Our international team offers clients a one-stop shop to address the issues they face, with expert lawyers across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and strong experience in Africa.

Our satellite group fits neatly within Bird & Bird's world leading Tech & Comms sector group, which offers advice in related sectors such as: energy and utilities, life sciences, transport and maritime, aerospace, defence and security, aviation, financial services, and healthcare. Bird & Bird also house a team focused on SMEs and the needs of start-ups.

Get in touch



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