

## OUTER SPACE COLLISION DENTS OSCAR 10

The European Space Agency has admitted that its latest *Ariane* launch went badly wrong when the rocket crashed into a satellite which it had just put into orbit.

*Ariane 6* launched both the European Communications Satellite *ECS1* and *Oscar 10* perfectly. The trouble came 53 seconds later, when the rocket squirted unused liquid oxygen fuel into space. The force of the jet was more than ESA engineers expected, and it rammed the rocket into *Oscar 10*, damaging the 2m aerial and the 'bell housing' on the kick motor. This could have caused the motor to burn for too long, putting the satellite in the wrong orbit.

AMSAT hopes to be able to rescue the satellite by a second burn of the motor to put it in the correct orbit. At the moment the satellite spends much of the time in the Van Allen radiation belt, which could shorten its life by between two and four years.

The outer space collision — believed to be the first ever — is extremely embarrassing for the ESA. After several failures, *Ariane 6* was widely seen as the Agency's last chance to prove itself as a credible alternative to NASA.



## '2MT' BACK ON THE AIR

The callsign 'Two Emma Tock', used by Marconi's original Wireless Telegraph Company to introduce Britain's first entertainment broadcasts way back in the 1920s, was re-launched by members of the new Marconi Radio Society after a 60-year interval. Over 50 club members, company and VIP guests gathered at Marconi Space and Defence Systems'

Stanmore headquarters to witness the start of a weekend in which the callsign, with a 'G' in front, was used to contact over 150 amateur stations around the world. One of the VIPs present was Eric Godsmark, Regional Secretary of the IARU (right of picture). He is seen here presenting a pennant to George Benbow, Chairman of the Marconi Radio Society.

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