

PARTNERSHIP

Cité de l'espace and Comat sign a partnership that highlights space industry's vitality in Toulouse



Left to right: Jean Claude DARDELET, Cité de l'espace's Chairman; Ludovic DAUDOIS, Comat's CEO; Benoit MOULAS, Comat's Chairman; Jean Baptiste DESBOIS, Cité de l'espace's CEO; Martial VANHOVE, CNES's Deputy Head of Communication; Sylvestre Maurice, astrophysicist at IRAP/OMP/ CNRS/ Université Toulouse III Paul Sabatier; Sébastien BARDE, Deputy Director of Science and Exploration, CNES's Digital Solutions and Operations Directorate.

A few days before Perseverance rover touchdown on Mars, the Cité de l'espace and Comat signed a partnership convention on January 22, 2021. For more than 45 years, Comat has been involved in space exploration and much engaged in the regional industry. The company takes part in the major missions led by the main national and international space organisations. Now, it offers its support to Cité de l'espace in the creation of two new exhibition areas.

The first original exhibition designed by Cité de l'espace will take place on the occasion of the flight of ESA's French astronaut Thomas Pesquet back to the International Space Station. On this occasion, from April 2021, Cité de l'espace will present Thomas's new mission. Comat will display its know-how to the visitors of Cité de l'espace by explaining how the equipment were made, from their design to their manufacturing and integration.

A few months later, in June 2021, Cité de l'espace will present a permanent exhibition on Martian exploration.

Pride of place will be given to Perseverance robot that landed on Mars in February 2021. Within this project, Comat will present its expertise to the visitors of Cité de l'espace. Indeed, the company was a major contributor to the industrialisation and manufacturing of the mechanical case of Perseverance's SuperCam camera.

This new partnership with Comat, as a player of the regional space industry, is consistent with the objective of the Cité de l'espace to be the sounding board of the whole space sector, and especially to valorise Toulouse as the European capital of space. In parallel, Cité de l'espace has always

received the support of the French Space Agency (CNES), well established in Toulouse with its technical centre. CNES will also showcase its expertise within the scope of the two exhibitions above mentioned. ESA also will support Cité de l'espace on the exhibition devoted to the Alpha mission, in which Thomas Pesquet will be involved in the spring of 2021.

ABOUT CITÉ DE L'ESPACE AND SEMECCEL

Arousing curiosity, inducing an eagerness to learn more, inspiring scientific vocations, making space, astronomy and scientific culture accessible to the general public, here are Cité de l'espace's challenges. It is the premier astronomy and space science culture centre. The place opened in 1997 on Toulouse City Council's initiative. It belongs to Toulouse Metropole, and is backed by the Occitanie Pyrénées-Méditerranée Region, its co-founders CNES, Airbus Defence and Space, Météo-France, the French Ministry for Education, further joined by Thales Alenia Space, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, Caisse d'Epargne de Midi-Pyrénées. It also receives support from its partners: ESA, Canopé, Université TOULOUSE III Paul-Sabatier, CNRS, OMP, IRAP, Safran and Onera.

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ABOUT COMAT

Comat (100 people), a French company located in Toulouse, specialises in the supply of space equipment for the following sectors: Exploration and Science – Telecom and Observation – Smallsats for constellations. After ChemCam (made with IRAP), Comat's team manufactured and integrated SuperCam's mechanical case. Comat is a renowned expert in the qualification of flight and microgravity equipment, observation instruments and propulsion systems. The company has invested in a state-of-the-art, competitive production unit located in Flourens near Toulouse, to design, manufacture and integrate its own equipment and customers' technologies.

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