

Press release

ARIANESPACE TO LAUNCH THE FIRST ACTIVE DEBRIS REMOVAL CLEARSPACE MISSION WITH VEGA C

- **Arianespace will launch ClearSpace-1, a servicing spacecraft, with the European light launcher Vega C for the benefits of ClearSpace.**
- **ClearSpace-1, developed by ClearSpace, is the first active debris removal mission, which will rendezvous, capture and remove a piece of space debris.**
- **The launch is scheduled from Europe's Spaceport in French Guiana, starting second half of 2026.**

Arianespace and ClearSpace signed a launch contract for ClearSpace-1, the first active debris removal mission that will capture and deorbit a derelict space debris of 112 kg. The launch, scheduled starting as soon as the second-half of 2026, will use the European light launcher Vega C to release the spacecraft into a Low Earth/Sun-Synchronous drift orbit for commissioning and critical tests. The servicer spacecraft will then be raised to the client object for rendezvous, capture and subsequent deorbitation through an atmospheric reentry.

The space debris object removed by this mission is the upper part of a Vespa (Vega Secondary Payload Adapter) left in a 'gradual disposal' orbit, in compliance with space debris mitigation regulations, during the second flight of a Vega launcher in 2013. Close in mass to a small satellite, the simple shape of this space debris will allow to demonstrate the technologies of the spacecraft and its quartet of robotic arms, thus opening the way for more challenging missions with multiple captures per flight.

"Above us, there currently are over 34,000 pieces of space debris of more than 10 centimeters each as well as about 6,500 operational satellites in orbit, a number expected to rise to more than 27,000 by the end of the decade. These figures demonstrate the need to find innovative solutions for preserving the benefits of Space for humanity and life on Earth. At Arianespace, we are honored to deliver this mission with Vega C, thus supporting a sustainable use of Space," said Stéphane Israël, CEO of Arianespace.

“We are very enthusiastic about this deal with Arianespace. This secures ClearSpace’s access to space for our trailblazing space debris removal mission. The ClearSpace-1 mission demonstrates a turning point in the space industry as we urgently need to bring solutions to a fundamental problem: we are putting objects into space quicker than they are being removed,” said Luc Piguet CEO and Co-founder of ClearSpace. *“We look forward to this European collaboration and the potential for more missions in the future.”*

In 2019, ESA selected ClearSpace from a field of more than a dozen candidates to lead the first mission to remove an ESA-owned item from orbit. Supported by ESA’s new Space Safety programme, the mission is being procured as a service contract with a startup-led commercial consortium, to help establish a new market for in-orbit servicing, as well as debris removal.

For further information, please contact:

Cyrielle Bouju

Press Contacts, Arianespace

Tel. +33 6 32 65 97 48

c.bouju@arianespace.com

Follow us on:



Claudia Durnat

Renens, Switzerland

Tel.: +41 78 211 93 33

claudia.durnat@clearspace.today

Follow us on:



About Arianespace

Arianespace uses Space to make life better on Earth by providing launch services for all types of satellites into all orbits, since 1980. Arianespace is responsible for operating the new-generation Ariane 6 and Vega C launchers, developed by ESA, with respectively ArianeGroup and Avio as industrial primes. Arianespace is headquartered in Evry, near Paris, and has a technical facility at the Guiana Space Center in French Guiana, plus local offices in Washington, D.C., Tokyo and Singapore. Arianespace is a subsidiary of ArianeGroup, which holds 74% of its share capital, with the balance held by 15 other shareholders from the Ariane and Vega European launcher industry, and ESA and Cnes as censors.

www.arianespace.com

About ClearSpace

ClearSpace, an in-orbit servicing (IOS) company created in 2018, is intent on revolutionizing how space missions are conducted. ClearSpace is becoming now a global company with a holding in Luxembourg and dynamic engineering teams in Switzerland, the UK, Germany, Luxembourg and in the United States. ClearSpace is creating the technologies that will support a wide range of IOS applications, from disposal and in-orbit transport to inspection, assembly, manufacturing, repair, and recycling. ClearSpace aims to support institutions and commercial operators alike to enhance sustainable space operations and promote a circular space economy. In 2020, the company was awarded a service contract by the European Space Agency to develop ClearSpace-1, the world's first mission to remove a piece of debris from orbit. The ClearSpace-1 mission is also supported by Elite Partner Omega. ClearSpace is growing rapidly and is actively engaged in the initial phases of two additional in-orbit servicing missions

www.clearspace.today