

# Kacific Launch

## Kacific selects SpaceX to provide launch service

By Godwin Ligo

**KACIFIC BROADBAND SATELLITES HAS** announced its first operational service, a high-speed broadband internet connection into the rural Lambubu area on Malekula Island in Vanuatu.

The service, which is based at Lambubu Primary School, is providing a broadband internet connection at speeds of up to 17Mbps from a Ku-band satellite.

A small VSAT terminal has been installed to receive the signal, and all villagers can now get the benefit of high speed internet connectivity. Matevulu College in Luganville was also recently connected, and several further schools and healthcare centres will be connected over the next few weeks.

The installation at Lambubu School is the result of a joint project between the Vanuatu government, local ISP Telsat and Kacific.

"This broadband connectivity from Kacific is a major step in our work to provide universal internet access to the people of Vanuatu," said Dalsie Baniala, head of the Telecommunications & Radiocommunications Regulator (IRR).

"The computer lab at Lambubu School will in future develop into a government service centre, providing internet and educational and health services to the wider community.

"This connectivity will provide previously unheard of educational opportunities for the children, as well as improving health outcomes for all villagers."

"I am very excited to see our first service in operation," said Jacques-Samuel Proton, General Manager of Kacific.

"The immediate need in Vanuatu is education and healthcare, but beyond this, affordable broadband internet enables more effective emergency planning and disaster recovery programmes. Broadband will open up opportunities to government to provide important services to regions of Vanuatu that would otherwise be under-served.

"The connectivity will also create opportunities for people in rural Vanuatu to engage in e-commerce, which can subsequently increase the wealth of communities."

Telsat owner and director, Rod Smith, said that the VSAT terminals were low-cost and very easy to install, but also robust and portable which is important in times of cyclones and earthquakes.

"We are seeing huge demand for broadband internet in Vanuatu.

"Once we get it into more schools, I think the demand will skyrocket. The kids take it home and teach the adults."

Mr Proton says that the deployment at Lambubu School is proof of the vision that started the company back in 2013.

"We wanted to create a frugal service that uses proven technology. We've designed it as a nimble, easy to deploy service that can adapt to different circumstances.

"If we provide good network quality at a price that people can afford, then demand increases dramatically. We've had a very strong response to our service, not just from islands around the Pacific, but far beyond, from South America to Africa." Kacific now has over US\$200 million of bandwidth in signed commitments from nations throughout the Pacific and south east Asia.

Kacific Broadband Satellites Group (Kacific) has selected SpaceX as the launch provider for its Kacific-1 satellite, which is being built by The Boeing Company. Kacific-1 will be launched on a Space X Falcon 9, a two-stage orbit-class rocket designed from the ground-up for maximum reliability and reusability.

"Space X has a breadth of vision that appeals to us," says Christian Patouraux, Kacific CEO.

"The company is committed to changing the way people think about space and the possibilities it represents.

"Signing with Space X as our launch service provider is a major step towards delivering our own vision. We look forward to seeing Kacific-1 atop a Falcon 9 Rocket in 2019."

"Space X is proud to partner with



Space X Falcon I launching on June 15, 2016. Kacific I will be launched on the same model. Photo: Kacific Office in Port Vila

Kacific on the milestone launch of the company's first satellite, Kacific-1," said Gwynne Shotwell, President and COO of Space X.

"We appreciate their confidence in our proven capabilities and look forward to delivering their satellite to orbit." In February 2017 Kacific placed an order with The Boeing Company for the Kacific-1 satellite.

Based on the reliable 702 satellite platform, Kacific-1 is designed to deliver high speed broadband via 56 narrow Ka-band beams, with the most powerful signal level ever achieved in a commercial satellite in the South East Asia and Pacific regions.

The Kacific Broadband Satellites Group is a satellite operator developing a high-speed broadband offering for underserved, remote and rural markets with disseminated pockets of population. It addresses the gap in supply with specifically designed

satellites using the latest multi-beam and high throughput space communications and ground technology transmitting over the Ka Band.

Using cost-effective technology and a lean business model Kacific aims to provide better broadband quality at significantly less than current retail prices, fostering greater internet usage and fuelling economic growth and improvements in service delivery across covered regions, with its first deployment focusing on South East Asia and the Pacific.

Kacific's headquarters are in Singapore with main operations out of Vanuatu.

"The launch site will be in the USA, where Space X will have several operational sites operating in parallel.

"We will determine which of these we will use closer to launch date," Kacific's spokesperson in Port Vila, Vanuatu told the Daily Post yesterday.