

SATELLITES

Thaicom secures deal with Globalstar

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SET-listed Thaicom has clinched a partnership deal with Globalstar, a global low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellite operator, to establish and operate ground facilities in Thailand for the American firm's LEO satellite constellation.

This is Thaicom's first commercial partnership in the LEO satellite business. Thaicom holds the exclusive rights for distribution of Globalstar in Thailand.

The company indicated it is also in talks with three other global LEO satellite service providers with strengths in different service categories.

Thaicom chief executive Patompob Suwansiri said Globalstar is also a leading provider of satellite Internet of Things (IoT) solutions and mobile satellite services through its 50 LEO satellites.

The agreement sees Globalstar hire Thaicom to develop, equip and operate ground station facilities in Thaicom's Teleport Centre in Pathum Thani for Globalstar's LEO satellite constellation, he said.

The infrastructure and services of the ground station will enable the deployment of commercial LEO satellite services by Globalstar in the region.

The deal also awards Thaicom as an exclusive partner to distribute services of Globalstar's LEO satellites in

Thailand, he said.

Thaicom is waiting to obtain a landing rights licence for foreign satellites from the office of National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission. The landing licence for foreign satellites renders an annual fee of 7% of total revenue, compared with a 4% fee rate for Thai satellites.

The two parties intend to commercialise services and solutions aimed at encouraging personnel life safety and management for tourism in Thailand as well as the maritime industry in the region with the services expected to be launched in the final quarter of this year, said Mr Patompob.

When the services are launched, this will be the country's first solutions linked with LEO satellite capacity, he said.

The collaboration also paves the way for a new opportunity for LEO satellite business in Thailand and the region.

Mr Patompob pointed out Globalstar is keen to provide IoT solutions linked with LEO satellites that could enable businesses to streamline their operations while enabling mobile assets to be monitored remotely via its satellite network.

"LEO satellites involve narrowband connectivity, which is different from Thaicom's satellite services. So this collaboration will complement Thaicom's portfolio," said Mr Patompob.