

# EMITS: Improving Communication between ESA and Industry

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## Introduction

Originally conceived as a system limited to the electronic delivery of ESA Invitations to Tender (ITTs), EMITS has evolved drastically during the last two years to become a real line of communication between ESA and industry, and between industries. The catalyst for this evolution was the request by the ESA Council at Ministerial Level to grant a special place to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Agency's system. One of the most constraining limitations for SMEs was identified as access to information and the difficulties in finding suitable industrial partners. EMITS was immediately identified as a key tool with enormous potential in this respect.

**ESA works in co-operation with industry and R&D organisations throughout Europe and Canada. All Invitations to Tender issued in open competition by the Agency are channelled through the Electronic Mail Invitation to Tender System (EMITS). EMITS is a web application that allows industry and R&D entities to access the Invitation to Tender documentation and other relevant information, to express their interest in participating in the various procurements and making that interest known to ESA and other potential partners.**

**This article provides a brief review of the EMITS system and highlights the most important features of interest for industry, R&D entities and national delegations, as well as the further developments to be expected in the short term.**

After two years of continuous improvement, access by industrial and other organisations to the ESA procurement system has become easier and more user friendly. The possibilities for them to establish fruitful co-operations and increase their mutual knowledge have been considerably expanded. It is a good example of how a measure that was triggered by a clear need on the part of SMEs has benefitted all of the industrial and R&D chain.

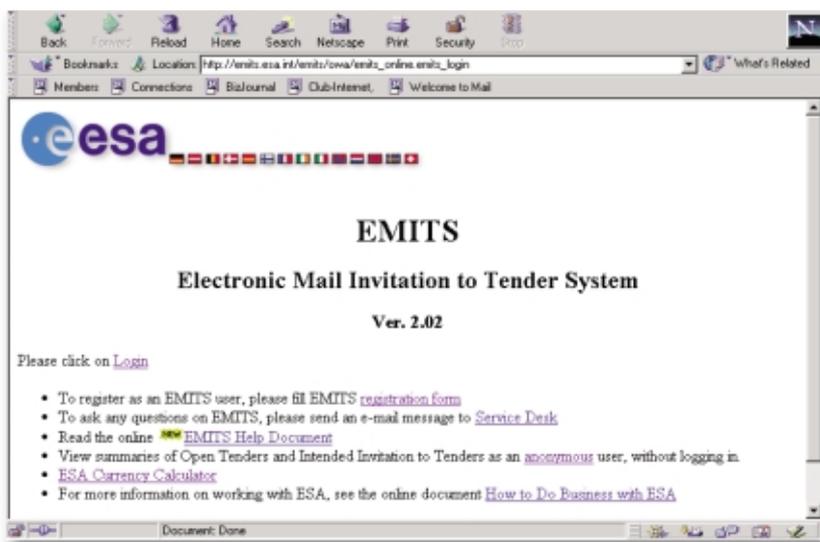
## Origin of the EMITS system

During the eighties, the Agency decided to embark on the development of a system of electronic distribution that would replace the sending of ESA ITTs by surface mail to all interested companies, research entities and national delegations. The idea was to reduce drastically the costs and manpower required for reproducing, printing and posting the ITTs, as well as to minimise the delays in that process. Development of the EMITS system was formally proposed to the 71st meeting of ESA's Industrial Policy Committee on 4 October 1984. The first operational system was deployed in 1987. In 1995, keeping the same overall concept, the system was moved to the Internet.

## Some statistics

The total number of active EMITS users from industry and R&D entities is around 3000. In addition, Delegations and many ESA staff are users of the system, bringing the total number of registered users to around 4000. An average of 57 000 EMITS sessions are recorded each year.

The continuous improvement of the system and the services that it provides has resulted in a substantial increase in utilisation. From 1999 to 2000, the use of EMITS by the 100 most active users increased by 11.3%, from 28 094 to 31 278 sessions, which is equivalent to one session per working day per user, on average. This statistic confirms EMITS's role as a communications hotline between ESA and industry.



## Who can access EMITS?

Staff belonging to entities qualified as ESA potential bidders (i.e. having an ESABD code) can get access to EMITS, in addition to ESA staff and national Delegations.

Interested users can directly request access to the application by completing the questionnaire available via the EMITS access page at <http://emits.esa.int>. This allows the EMITS help desk to check whether a valid ESABD exists already for their company or organisation. If this is the case, they will obtain immediate access; otherwise, they will be invited to provide the Industrial Relations Service at the Agency's Headquarters in Paris (SME-Unit@hq.esa.fr) with the information necessary to become a potential ESA bidder.

## Main functionalities

Through EMITS, industry has access to the following information:

- All *Open Invitations to Tender* published by ESA. The different elements of the tender – letter of invitation, special tender conditions, special contract conditions and Statement of Work – can all be downloaded. Clarifications as a result of questions raised by industry are also published via EMITS, in order to provide all potential bidders with the same information.
- All *Intended Invitations to Tender*, during the preparation of the corresponding open Invitations to Tender. Through EMITS, industry can obtain early information about the scope of the intended procurements, the intended publication date for the open Invitation to Tender, budget, programme, participating States, etc.
- *Relevant Information for Industry*. The most relevant information is provided through a link to the ESA industry web portal, where industry can gain access to standards, news relevant to industry, links to selected programmatic information, ESA laboratories, final reports of contracts, etc.
- *Reference documentation*. These are essential documents forming an integral part of any procurement action (basically, the General Conditions of Tender for ESA contracts, including the costing forms and the General Clauses and Conditions for ESA contracts) and the technical standards (through a link to the ESA industry portal).
- *News*. EMITS users are also provided with relevant information not generally related to a particular procurement (Announcements of Opportunity, Calls for Ideas, information of interest for industry, etc.).

In what follows, we will concentrate on those EMITS services that are having a major impact on improving the mutual knowledge base of

industry and other organisations and hence on the establishment of fruitful industrial relations, i.e.:

- The expression of interest in Open Tenders and Intended Invitations to Tender.
- The availability, through EMITS, of the web sites of the participating companies and organisations.
- The access, through EMITS, to the European Space Industry Directory.
- The EMITS 'Yellow Pages'.

### *Expression of interest: a fundamental tool for fostering industrial co-operation and innovation*

EMITS incorporates an 'Express Interest' function that enables users to make known to ESA and the other industries and organisations their interest in bidding against a given Invitation to Tender. Interest can be expressed as soon as an Intended Invitation to Tender (IITT) is published and can be confirmed/revoked when the formal Invitation to Tender (ITT/AO) is eventually published.

Examples of Expressions of Interest

Part 1: Companies having expressed interest on this activity through the EMITS IFF function  
(To see "Specialisation Area" details click on "Yes" for each entity or click here to see the complete)

Preferred role (Prime/Sub)	Entity name	Type of entity	Specialisation Area	Contact Person Telephone Fax Email Address	Address	WEB Site /
Sub	SATELLITE SERVICES BV (Visibility: Public) (EMITS user: 16763)	SME	Yes	G S SIMS Tel:+31 71 4028120 Fax:+31 71 4027934 g.sims@saterv.nl	SCHIEPMAKERSTRAAT 40 KATWIJK	http://www.s
Either	ETA MAX SPACE GMBH (Visibility: Public) (EMITS user: etamax01)	SME	Yes	H SDOWNUS Tel:+49 531 3804190 Fax:+49 531 3804199 h.sdowanus@etamax.de	REBENRING 33 BRAUNSCHWEIG	http://www.e
Either	ROVSDING A/S (Visibility: Public) (EMITS user: 17218)		Yes	ALEX BECKAARD-KRISTENSEN Tel:+45 4466 5511 Fax:+45 4466 5522 info@rovding.dk	LAUTRUPFANG 1B BALLERUP	http://www.r

PRE-DEVELOPMENT OF A FREQUENCY GENERATOR AND MODULATOR FOR GALILEOSAT

Entity name	Contact Person Telephone Fax Email Address	Specialisation Area
SATELLITE SERVICES BV	G S SIMS Tel:+31 71 4028120 Fax:+31 71 4027934 g.sims@saterv.nl	supply of EGSE/simulation and test equipment
ETA MAX SPACE GMBH	H SDOWNUS Tel:+49 531 3804190 Fax:+49 531 3804199 h.sdowanus@etamax.de	OO Software Design & Engineering, SW Verification & Validation
ROVSDING A/S	17218 info@rovding.dk	SW Development, EGSE

Use of hyperlinks in the "Specialisation" field

LIST OF FIRMS HAVING FILLED THE SPECIALISATION AREA ON THIS ACTIVITY  
AO3732  
ROBOTIC ASSEMBLY OF LARGE SPACE STRUCTURES

Entity name	Contact Person Telephone Fax Email Address	Specialisation Area
ROBODYNE CYBERNETICS	JOSEPH MICHAEL Tel:+44 7941100440 j.michael@steflow.demon.co.uk	Fractal robots for 100% automated assembly of large structures at low cost <a href="http://www.stellar.demon.co.uk/news/space.htm">http://www.stellar.demon.co.uk/news/space.htm</a>

**Fractal Robots**  
DIGITAL MATTER CONTROL WEB SITE  
www.stellar.demon.co.uk

HOME      FAQ  
Full Contents      Developers  
Contact Us      Future  
                         Misc

Business      **Space Engineering**

Order      Space is probably one of the best application areas for fractal robots because of its cheapness, built in self repair and 100% automation possibilities.

Stocks

Jobs

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Medical

When expressing their interest in bidding for a particular tender, EMITS users are asked to indicate whether they:

- Intend to bid as a Prime or as a Subcontractor, or either (i.e. their role).
- Accept that their interest is made visible to other companies, or request that it is limited only to ESA. It is worth mentioning that the vast majority of users choose the full-visibility option, thereby taking full advantage of the philosophy and potential of EMITS.
- Want to include their 'field of specialisation'. These are details of areas of speciality, products, services, capabilities, etc. that the user considers he could satisfactorily provide in reply to the specific Invitation to Tender. In the 'specialisation field' box, bidders can insert Internet addresses corresponding, for instance, to a particular area of their company or institution web site where more information can be found about related capabilities, products, projects, etc., or even to File Transfer Protocol (FTP) servers where related reports can be obtained. The URL then becomes active to other EMITS users, who can click directly on the link and access that targeted information. This function has enormous potential as it gives EMITS users the ability to obtain very good information about possible partners.

All this information goes into the 'List of Firms', which logs all companies that have expressed interest in a given tender. It allows those companies to be directly informed of any subsequent modification in the tender and to be notified by e-mail when the ITT is eventually issued, among other things.

The EMITS Yellow Pages: an additional means of improving the mutual knowledge of the 'space family' at working level

The EMITS Yellow Pages provide access to the entity details as well as the co-ordinates of key staff of all companies and organisations doing, or willing to do, business with ESA. They allow the user to search for and display bidders based on selected criteria, such as bidder code, country, entity name, type of entity or any combination of these criteria.

The EMITS Yellow Pages constitute the most accurate and targetted contacts database of space industry and space organisations in Europe, including information on key staff for the procurement process. This represents a fundamental step towards fostering industrial co-operation.

*The web sites of space industry and organisations available through EMITS: a unique opportunity to reach a targetted community*

EMITS provides industry and other organisations with direct access to each other's web sites. This functionality was added to provide a common platform for improving their mutual knowledge base, and therefore for enhancing the possibilities for fruitful co-operation.

EMITS users are invited to provide their web site address in their user preferences profile. Thereafter, the entity's web site will be prompted in EMITS wherever the company name appears (in the Yellow Pages, in the List of Firms having expressed interest in an ITT, etc.). The percentage of web site addresses included in the system is very high, reflecting the importance that EMITS users attach to this function.

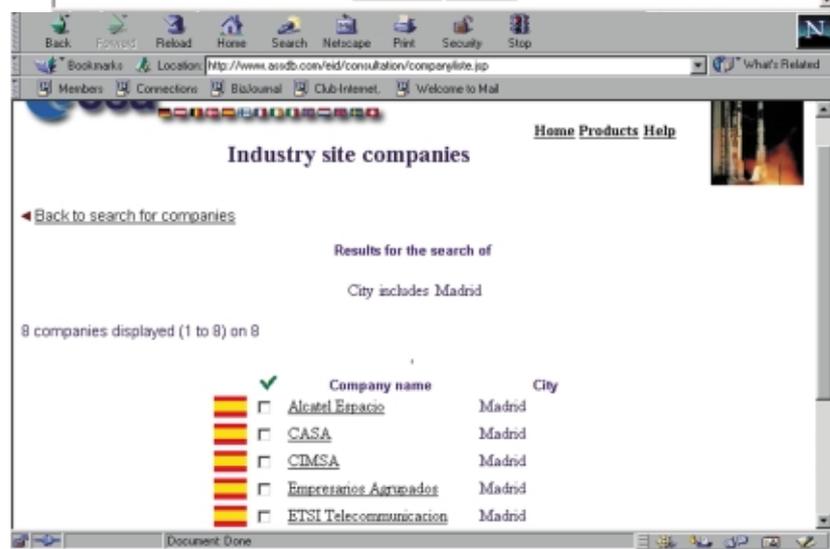
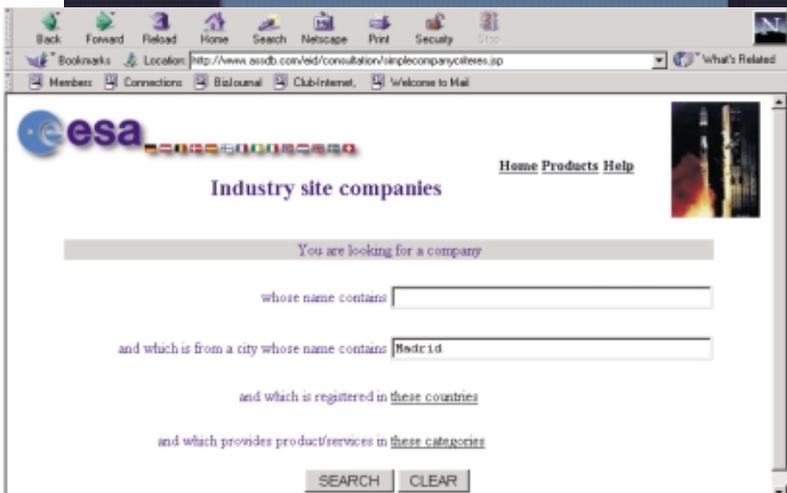
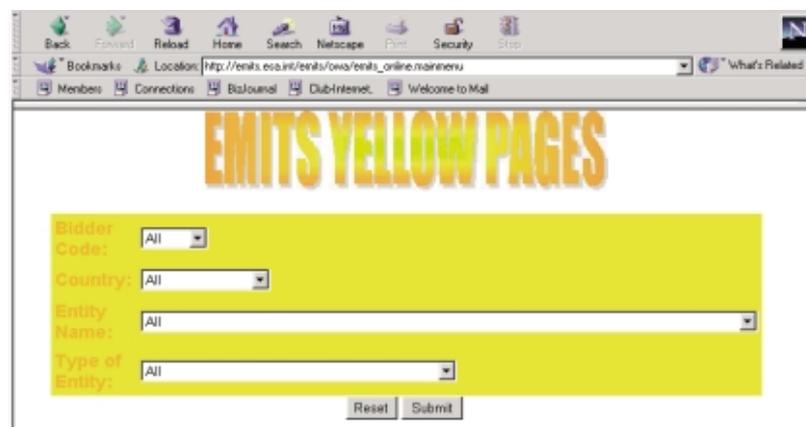
*The European Space Industry Directory: an interactive reservoir of all actors, products and capabilities in the European space sector*  
The European Space Industry Directory (ESID) is an on-line database containing information about:

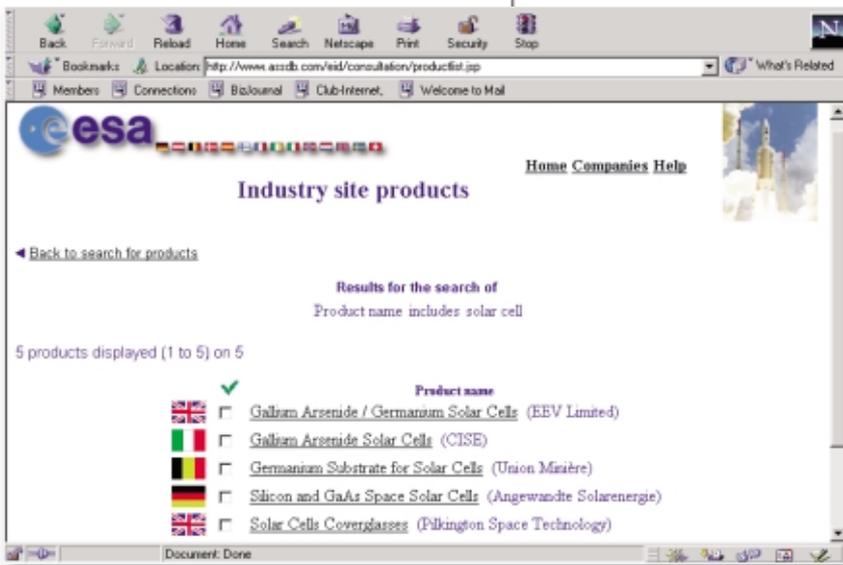
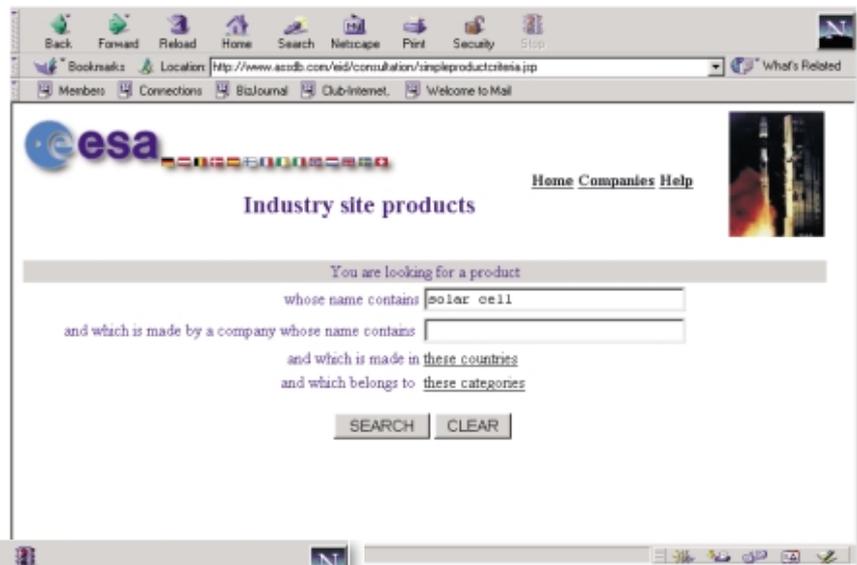
- the space products, technologies and services developed within the Member and Associate Member States of ESA
- the companies and organisations developing these products, technologies and services.

The ESID keeps growing steadily and covers the full spectrum of space activities, from ground segment to payloads, from scientific laboratories to worldwide corporations.

The Directory relies on an Oracle database where all products and companies are stored, and has powerful search and reporting capabilities. It is intended as a practical tool allowing industry to find the right partners for their space activities in ESA, national and commercial programmes.

The information within the ESID database is provided by the companies themselves, on a voluntary basis. To be included in the Directory, companies must be involved in activities specific or closely related to space (aviation activities are not eligible) and a significant presence in at least one of the ESA Member and Associate Member States. Only entities that have qualified as potential ESA bidders and have an ESABD code can appear in the ESID. The EMITS system also provides them with the possibility to update their data interactively and include additional products.





This CNES initiative could also be followed by the other national space agencies. Adaptation of EMITS to cope with this requirement is under development.

### Conclusion

The EMITS system, together with the elements built around it (Industry Web Site, Industry Directories, etc.), represent a new way for the Agency to interact with industry and R&D organisations, where emphasis is put, in particular, on the following issues:

- Fairness in the procurement process.
- Transparency.
- Equal access to information.
- Supply-chain improvements, industry networking.
- Opening possibilities for innovative companies and R&D entities to 'penetrate' the system.
- Support to qualitative industrial-policy measures (policies encouraging, for instance, the participation/cooperation of SMEs, of equipment suppliers, of R&D entities, etc.).

The new EMITS has been deployed at a key moment, when industry is confronted with a process of consolidation at prime-contractor level, when the need to safeguard fairness and the interests of equipment suppliers and non-primes is essential, and when the need to foster innovation is more important than ever. The impact of the new system will depend fundamentally on the use that industry makes of it. We are confident that the user friendliness of the system and the many benefits it provides, to industry and to ESA, will ensure that its potential is exploited to the full, for the benefit of space.



### Major expected evolution in the short term: EMITS for external entities

The above improvements to the EMITS system have had an immediate repercussion in terms of the scope of the application. It has been decided to expand EMITS to also cover the Invitations to Tender issued by space prime contractors to select their subcontractors and equipment suppliers for major satellite projects. ESA's scientific project Herschel/Planck will be the first where the EMITS system will be used in this way. The selected prime contractor will publish his Invitations to Tender for the project conducted in open competition in a dedicated area of EMITS. This will greatly improve the transparency and fairness of the procurement process, as well as the efficiency of the overall procurement system.

Moreover, the French national space agency CNES has expressed interest in using the functionalities of EMITS for its national programme in order to ensure that selected procurements reach all European space industry and organisations in an effective way.

\* A pilot version of the ESID database can be accessed at: <http://www.assdb.com/eid/consultation/index.html>