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Amateur Radio and Aviation Education IV

South African Amateur Radio Payload Reaches Orbit

After several delays, South Africa's SumbandilaSat satellite finally blasted to orbit aboard a Soyuz rocket from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on September 16. The main payload is a multi-spectral imager, but the satellite also carries an Amateur Radio component consisting of a 2 meter/70 cm FM repeater.

After SumbandilaSat is fully commissioned, the repeater will be activated with an uplink at 145.880 MHz and a downlink at 435.350 MHz; there will also be a voice beacon at 435.300 MHz. The transponder mode will be controlled by a CTCSS tone on the uplink frequency. The CTCSS tone frequencies have yet to be announced.

SumbandilaSat was sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology and was built at SunSpace in cooperation with the Stellenbosch University.

In addition to the SA-AMSAT amateur module, the satellite carries Stellenbosch University's radiation experiment and software defined radio (SDR) project, an experiment from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and a VLF radio module from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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