

## Guest-editorial

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# The 7th Ka Band Utilization Conference

26–28 September 2001, Santa Margherita Ligure, Genoa, Italy

This is the second time that a special issue based on the works of the Ka Band Utilization Conference has been published, this time in *Space Communications* an International Journal, and all of us that have been involved with the conference are very proud of this distinction.<sup>1</sup>

As Guest Editors, we want to express our sincere thanks to Geoff Hyde, Editor-in-Chief of *Space Communications* for this honor. We also want to thank the members of the Technical Committee of the 7th Ka Band Utilization Conference for their support over the years in the selection of the papers and the make-up of the conference sessions. Finally, our thanks to Dr. Richard Gedney, former NASA ACTS Project Manager, and to Robert A. Bauer, current NASA ACTS Project Manager for their assistance in the difficult task of choosing the papers to be included in this special issue.

At the time of the conference, despite the events of September 11, the prospects for the realization and utilization of the Ka Band Broadband systems appeared good, and there was optimism that several systems would begin operations in the 2003 time frame. Those expectations were suddenly dashed by the announcement in November that Astrolink would stop work, and

the subsequent announcement that work on Wild Blue also was stopped. It appears that only Spaceway is still in the running, although many believe that even that project is clouded by uncertainty due to the pending acquisition of Hughes Direct TV and associated satellite services by Echostar.

These events could easily raise doubts about the need for continued activity in Ka Band, but we believe that they are just another temporary setback and that the technology that has been developed will be put to use and serve the purpose for which it was intended.

We firmly believe that Ka Band satellites will play a significant role in bringing competitive broadband communications to the market, and will be the sole providers of these services in rural and remote areas which will never receive service by terrestrial providers, especially now that the concept of universal service has fallen by the wayside with the almost global deregulation of the telecommunications industry.

As for the specific papers we have selected, they cover activities in the areas of systems, propagation and modeling, components, ground systems' safety and standards, and marketing projections.

We hope that you find our selections interesting and informative!

Frank Gargione  
Franco Marconicchio

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<sup>1</sup>The first special issue dedicated to The 4th Ka Band Utilization Conference was published in the *International Journal of Satellite Communications* 17(3,4), 1999.