



Press release

Nexans on board Venus Express

Paris, November 17, 2005 – Nexans, the worldwide leader in the cable industry, has supplied the whole electric harness on board the Venus Express spacecraft, which was launched on November 9 from Baikonur, Kazakhstan. This project has been conducted by Nexans Harnesses, a Nexans company specialised in the design and manufacture of harnesses* based in Belgium, for EADS Astrium SAS (France).

During this project, which started in 2003, Nexans was contracted to design, manufacture and provide installation support for an electric harness consisting of 9,000 contact points and 500 connectors. The harness was built in Belgium and integration was completed at the Alcatel Alenia Space plant in Turin, Italy. Some last-minute adjustments were then made at Intespace in Toulouse, France.

Eric Leurquin, Aerospace & Defence Manager for Nexans Harnesses, said: *“Venus Express was built using the same engineering design and work organisation as Mars Express. This enabled us to develop the programme faster and reduce the overall project cost. However, to allow for the mission’s specific goals and for different planetary conditions, we have of course made some changes for Venus Express.”*

As an expert of wiring in limited-space environments, Nexans provides electric harnesses meeting stringent requirements in terms of weight and durability. Our harnesses are also designed to withstand high stress during the critical launch phase, as well as extremely high or low temperatures while in orbit.

With Venus Express, Nexans continues its involvement in international space projects. Leveraging its experience in sophisticated wiring, the Group has already delivered electric harnesses for other space science programmes such as Mars Express, Goce, and Herschel & Planck.

(*) Electric harnesses are used to supply information and power to mission-critical systems.

The Venus Express mission

Venus Express is the first-ever spacecraft sent by the European Space Agency (ESA) to probe Venus, the second planet out from the Sun. The Venus Express mission aims at exploring Venus' atmosphere and clouds and mapping surface temperatures.

Also known as the "Morning Star" or "Evening Star", Venus is the closest planet to the Earth and it is regarded as its sister planet because of their similar size and weight. However, the two planets developed in radically different ways. The surface temperature on Venus is hotter than a kitchen oven and the atmosphere is a choking mixture of noxious gases. Any spacecraft designed to probe Venus must therefore be adapted to the most extreme conditions.

About Nexans

Nexans is the worldwide leader in the cable industry. The Group brings an extensive range of advanced copper and optical fibre cable solutions to the infrastructure, industry and building markets. Nexans cables and cabling systems can be found in every area of people's lives, from telecommunications and energy networks, to aeronautics, aerospace, automobile, railways, building, petrochemical, medical applications, etc. With an industrial presence in 29 countries and commercial activities throughout the world, Nexans employs 20,000 people and had sales in 2004 of 4.8 billion euros. Nexans is listed on the Paris stock exchange. More information available on www.nexans.com

Nexans Harnesses is a flexible, innovative and reliable specialist in electric and electro-optic connection systems and harnesses. Our activities cover the complete process from feasibility study, design, manufacturing to the installation on aircrafts, satellites and industrial vehicles.

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