

AGILE SATELLITE DE-ORBITED AFTER 17 YEARS OF INTENSE ACTIVITY AS A COSMIC SOURCES' HUNTER

The Astrorivelatore Gamma a Immagini LEggero, the space telescope of the Italian Space Agency (ASI), returned from the atmosphere.

AGILE during a journey which counted more than 87,200 orbits around the Earth looked into the most energetic sources of the Universe emitting Gamma rays and X-rays. It was an incredibly successful space program in the frame of scientific space activities.

The satellite was entirely made in Italy and developed by OHB Italia (as Prime Contractor) for ASI with the support of INAF and INFN, Thales Alenia Space, Rheinmetall, Telespazio and different universities.

AGILE was placed in low equatorial orbit in 2007 and was originally designed for two years lifetime: it has then exceeded all the expectations!

The mission was specifically designed to acquire and catalogue galactic and extragalactic Gamma-ray sources, to observe and understand the most energetic and complex phenomena produced by cosmic sources, such as black holes and neutron stars.

In the course of its operational life, AGILE has revealed thousands of transient events of cosmic origin such as Gamma Ray Bursts (GRB), events associated with neutrinos and Fast Radio Bursts (FRB), solar flares, as well as events of terrestrial origin such as Terrestrial Gamma-ray Flashes (TGF). These observations were regularly transmitted to the ground, through the ASI tracking station in Malindi (Kenya) and let them available to the national and international scientific community.

With a total mass of only 350kg, AGILE was a highly innovative satellite, combining detectors ranging from X-band to Gamma band. AGILE's payload was the most compact instrument in high-energy astrophysics and had a flight data processing system that enabled the fastest alert gamma system in the world. AGILE instruments were operating at different wavelengths and provided a spectral overview of high-energy events.

In 2012 the scientists of AGILE were awarded the Bruno Rossi Prize (the most important international award in the field of high-energy astrophysics) thanks to the discovery of the variability related to the Crab Nebula.

“OHB Italia is proud for the precious contribution offered by the AGILE mission to the successful achievements of the scientific community” – stated Roberto Aceti, Managing Director of OHB Italia – “An extraordinary program for both astrophysics and technology. Its detailed mapping of the entire Galaxy and the data provided on hundreds of galactic and extra-galactic sources have incomparable value for a better and deeper knowledge of the universe”.

About OH B Italia

OH B Italia S.p.A. is part of the European Space and Technology Group OH B SE (listed in the Frankfurt Stock Exchange), one of the three top space companies in Europe with 3.000 employees worldwide and total revenues for EUR 1.001 Mio. in 2022.

OH B Italia S.p.A. was founded in 1981, nowadays in Italy it is one of the two major satellite system integrators with more than EUR 243 Mio. backlog and EUR 90 Mio. revenues in 2022

Thanks to its expertise operating for more than four decades in the space systems, it is a recognized national leader in the fields of Satellites & Missions, Earth Observation, Space Situational Awareness (SSA), Space Surveillance & Tracking (SST), Equipment, Scientific & Planetary Instruments, with headquarters and Clean Room facilities (850 sqm) in Milan and offices in Rome and Benevento. OH B Italia S.p.A. provides innovative solutions combined with development / integration of complex equipment and a strong focus on customer satisfaction. The company employs 280 people between staff and collaborators, with a high percentage of graduates (82%) whose degrees are mainly in Aerospace Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, Electronic Engineering and IT.

OH B Italia S.p.A. is Prime Contractor for important missions of the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and the European Space Agency (ESA), which are the main customers along with Research Institutes, Universities and all the industrial key players in the space market, with special attention to export domain.

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