



U.S. Army Selects EchoStar's Hughes to Deploy 5G Open RAN with RAN Intelligent Controller at Fort Bliss

November 19, 2024

\$6.5M Contract Will Support Open RAN with a RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC) Experimentation for U.S. Department of Defense

DENVER, Nov. 19, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- EchoStar Corporation, (Nasdaq: SATS) today shared that its subsidiary Hughes Network Systems, LLC, was awarded a \$6.5 million contract to deploy a 5G Open Radio Access Network (ORAN) prototype at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. The network will feature a RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC), which will allow the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to test RIC-based software applications for military networks. The 5G Open RAN prototype equipment will be installed on Fort Bliss to operate a temporary network for evaluation purposes, which will then transition to serve as part of the Hughes commercial network supporting both DoD and commercial customers in and around Fort Bliss. The project is a joint effort of the U.S. Army, the DoD Chief Information Officer (CIO), and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSDR&E)).



"This contract award is an important step forward for the U.S. Department of Defense's efforts to develop next generation communications networks that can empower innovative applications," said Dan Rasmussen, senior vice president, North American Enterprise, Hughes Network Systems. "The EchoStar team is looking forward to collaborating with the U.S. Army to test and evaluate specific military use cases that leverage 5G ORAN and the RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC). The Fort Bliss program will pave the way for further RIC exploration, enhancing network performance for both U.S. government and commercial applications."

Hughes will serve as the prime contractor, demonstrating, qualifying, and integrating a RAN Intelligent Controller (RIC) in the test network, which will also incorporate ORAN infrastructure, engineering expertise, and 5G spectrum from Boost Mobile, another EchoStar company.

The RIC, which acts as a platform for various software applications, will allow the DoD to test various RAN applications. The primary use case that the Fort Bliss prototype will test through the RIC is the ability to rapidly change spectrum at the 5G control node, a capability that has real world relevance to resilient communications for a mobile command post.

The scope of the Open RAN project at Fort Bliss is designed to meet key strategic milestones that support FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act requirements and DoD initiatives to diversify supply chain. It will also improve Army processes for enabling MNO access to installations. This initiative will serve as a testing ground for developing new Open RAN RIC tactical applications, developing footprints for other installations, and establishing a training site for both civilian and military technical staff. The Army will also evaluate policies and network architecture standards that leverage commercially interchangeable and vendor agnostic solutions to enhance the Army Unified Network.

The Fort Bliss program will build on EchoStar's expertise in ORAN, already demonstrated through a [5G ORAN installation](#) deployed at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), which [was completed in 2023](#) and [extended in March](#). The NASWI deployment improves aircraft readiness by enabling immediate, real-time communication and coordination across the flight line, reducing maintenance and turnaround time for jets on base.

To learn more about delivering secure communications, anytime, anywhere, please visit [Hughes.com](#).

About EchoStar

EchoStar Corporation (Nasdaq: SATS) is a premier provider of technology, networking services, television entertainment and connectivity, offering consumer, enterprise, operator and government solutions worldwide under its EchoStar®, Boost Mobile®, Boost Infinite, Sling TV, DISH TV, Hughes®, Hughesnet®, HughesON™, and JUPITER™ brands. In Europe, EchoStar operates under its EchoStar Mobile Limited subsidiary and in Australia, the company operates as EchoStar Global Australia. For more information, visit [www.echostar.com](#) and follow EchoStar on X (Twitter) and LinkedIn.

About Hughes

Hughes Network Systems, LLC, an EchoStar company (Nasdaq: SATS), provides broadband equipment and services; managed services featuring smart, software-defined networking; and end-to-end network operation for millions of consumers, businesses, governments, airlines, and communities worldwide. The Hughes flagship internet service, Hughesnet®, connects millions of people across the Americas, and the Hughes JUPITER™ System powers internet access for tens of millions more worldwide. Hughes supplies more than half the global satellite terminal market to leading satellite operators, mobile network operators and military customers. Hughes products and services have helped bring in-flight video and broadband to thousands of aircraft for over twenty years. A managed network services provider, Hughes supports approximately half a million enterprise sites with its portfolio of wired and wireless solutions including 5G Open RAN and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. To learn more, visit [www.hughes.com](#) or follow HughesConnects on [X](#) (Twitter) and [LinkedIn](#).

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news@echostar.com