

【SpaceX社の発表のポイント(仮訳)】

- 2月3日(木)午後1時13分(米国東部標準時)、ファルコン9は、フロリダ州のケネディ宇宙センターから49機のStarlink衛星を地球低軌道に打ち上げた。ファルコン9の第2段ロケットは、衛星を高度約210kmの所定の軌道に投入し、各衛星は制御された飛行を実現した。
- **しかし、衛星は、金曜日に地磁気嵐の影響を大きく受けた。地磁気嵐は大気を暖め、低高度での大気密度を増加させた。実際、地磁気嵐のために、大気抵抗がこれまでの打ち上げ時より最大で50%も増加した。**
- Starlinkのチームは、抵抗を最小限に抑えるために、衛星を“紙”のように(進行方向に対して)平らにして飛行させるセーフモードに移行させ、嵐から身を守るようにした。
- 予備的な分析によると、低高度で抵抗が増加したため、**衛星はセーフモードから離脱して軌道の高度を上げることができず、最大で40機の衛星が大気圏に再突入した(喪失した)。**

GEOMAGNETIC STORM AND RECENTLY DEPLOYED STARLINK SATELLITES February 8, 2022

On Thursday, February 3 at 1:13 p.m. EST, Falcon 9 launched 49 Starlink satellites to low Earth orbit from Launch Complex 39A (LC-39A) at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Falcon 9's second stage deployed the satellites into their intended orbit, with a perigee of approximately 210 kilometers above Earth, and each satellite achieved controlled flight.

SpaceX deploys its satellites into these lower orbits so that in the very rare case any satellite does not pass initial system checkouts it will quickly be deorbited by atmospheric drag. While the low deployment altitude requires more capable satellites at a considerable cost to us, it's the right thing to do to maintain a sustainable space environment.

Unfortunately, the satellites deployed on Thursday were significantly impacted by a geomagnetic storm on Friday. These storms cause the atmosphere to warm and atmospheric density at our low deployment altitudes to increase. In fact, onboard GPS suggests the escalation speed and severity of the storm caused atmospheric drag to increase up to 50 percent higher than during previous launches. The Starlink team commanded the satellites into a safe-mode where they would fly edge-on (like a sheet of paper) to minimize drag—to effectively “take cover from the storm”—and continued to work closely with the Space Force's 18th Space Control Squadron and LeoLabs to provide updates on the satellites based on ground radars.

Preliminary analysis show the increased drag at the low altitudes prevented the satellites from leaving safe-mode to begin orbit raising maneuvers, and up to 40 of the satellites will reenter or already have reentered the Earth's atmosphere. The deorbiting satellites pose zero collision risk with other satellites and by design demise upon atmospheric reentry—meaning no orbital debris is created and no satellite parts hit the ground. This unique situation demonstrates the great lengths the Starlink team has gone to ensure the system is on the leading edge of on-orbit debris mitigation.

(参考) SpaceX社 Starlink(米国)

- 最大42,000機の衛星コンステレーションにより主要国でブロードバンドインターネットを提供
- 2021年8月時点で約1,500機の衛星打ち上げが完了
- 初期費用(端末)499ドル、月額99ドルでサービス開始済
- KDDIが携帯基地局のバックホール回線として使用予定



過去の60機のStarlink衛星の打ち上げ

