



## *Le Commandant Charcot* turns to Airbus' satellite images to optimise navigation in the Arctic



***Le Commandant Charcot* is relying on Airbus' expertise in high-resolution satellite imagery to prepare and fine-tune its route plans in the Arctic. Airbus already provides satellite images of the Arctic to institutions for needs related to shipping, defence, and safety at sea. Other joint applications with PONANT are being studied.**

Images delivered by Airbus in near real-time provide valuable information on ice conditions all along the route. The crew can then adjust the itinerary to better account for the updated environmental conditions, ensure the ship's safety, optimise comfort for guests and limit fuel consumption.

### **A world first in exploration cruises**

A leader in the supply of high-resolution optical and radar satellite imagery, Airbus is able to deliver optical and radar images of the North Pole by adapting its satellite tasking based on the needs of the ship.

The processing workflow, first used by *Le Commandant Charcot's* first sailings to the North Pole in 2021, involves the Airbus Customer Support teams, PONANT's Fleet Digital Manager and the ship's crew to plan which images to purchase to optimise the planned route. Ordered a few days in advance, the images produced and delivered by Airbus' radar satellite constellation are available within an hour of purchase. The fleet support team receives and redirects them to the ship. The captain and his team can then adjust the route plan accordingly.

*“Airbus technology is an invaluable aid when navigating Polar Regions, which are always full of surprises. The radar images are extremely precise, enabling us to assess the surface, thickness and hardness of ice along the route and plan the most efficient path in terms of safety, comfort and fuel consumption. If necessary, we can even purchase images the same day,”* explains Captain David Marionneau, Director Marine Operations at PONANT. *“We have also used these images for Le Commandant Charcot’s first Northwest Passage crossing”.*

### **New applications being studied**

PONANT and Airbus are studying new applications for space images, radar images and very high-resolution optical images. The Pléiades Neo satellites 3 and 4, launched in 2021, supply an exceptional resolution of 30 cm making it possible to foresee applications for other areas such as ports and other regions like the Antarctic.

*“Le Commandant Charcot has specific needs in terms of accessibility, safety and protecting biodiversity. Working with PONANT on exploration cruise navigation in the Arctic enriches our respective”* says François Lombard, Head of Intelligence business at Airbus Defence and Space. *“We are proud to be part of this first North Pole cruise adventure, and we thank PONANT for their trust in us”.*

### **ABOUT PONANT**

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*Explore to Inspire:* explore to better understand, learn, share and protect. For more than 30 years, PONANT has been committed to more responsible tourism and voyages of exploration which have meaning. The French-flagged fleet comprises 13 small capacity ships equipped with state of the art environmentally friendly equipment. With PONANT, exploration is refined, authentic and a source of inspiration. For more information [www.ponant.com](http://www.ponant.com)

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