

Novel On-board Computer and Data Handling Subsystem for European ADCS for Earth Observation Application

EDHPC 2025, 13 - 17 October 2025, Elche, Spain

Bojan Kotnik, bojan.kotnik@skylabs.si

About SkyLabs

SkyLabs is platform subsystems provider for emerging space market



Electrical Power Systems

- All-in-one solutions
- High-level of integration



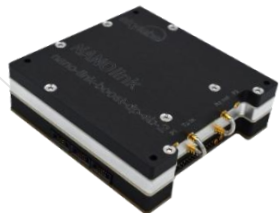
On-Board Computers

- Highly miniaturised with FT
- Mid- to high-performance



Communication

- S-BAND
- Best SWaP & CCSDS compliant
- **SDLP-Secure** connectivity



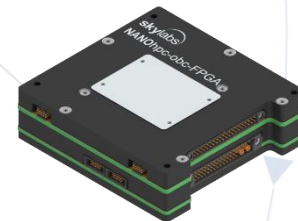
Remote Terminal Units

- Build-in high-level functionality
- Scalable & modular approach



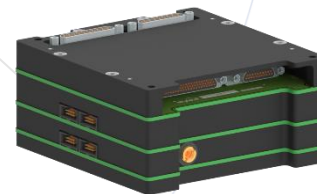
High Processing Computing

- Fault Tolerant reliable HPC
- Clustering supported
- HW AI Extension



Attitude Determination and Control System

- E-ADCS (Prime: Indra-Deimos)
- 6U – 75kg



E-ADCS Introduction



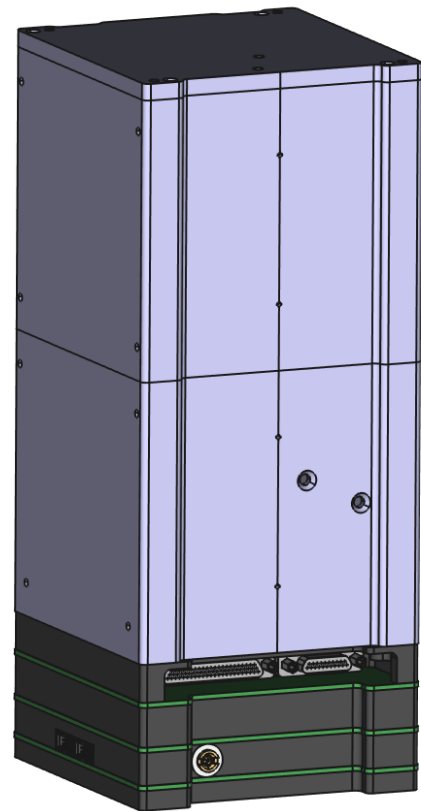
- A fully European-built ADCS is vital for space autonomy and independence.
- Aligns with EU and ESA goals for sovereignty in space technology.
- The E-ADCS, developed by **Indra Deimos** (prime) and **SkyLabs** (subcontractor) under an ESA co-funded initiative, strengthens European sovereignty, security, resilience, and leadership in small satellite systems.



E-ADCS Architecture

Main components of E-ADCS:

- **NANOadcs (SkyLabs)**
 - Includes an on-board computer (OBC) for executing GNC algorithms.
 - Processes sensor data to determine satellite attitude.
 - Commands and drives actuators for attitude control.
 - Integrates a GNSS receiver for precise positioning.
 - Integrates on-board magnetometer and gyroscope
- **ADCS Sensors and Actuators (Indra Deimos)**
 - Sensors: sun, star trackers, magnetometer, gyro
 - Actuators: magnetorquers and reaction wheels
- **ADCS Software/GNC Algorithms (Indra Deimos)**
 - Including Kalman filters, quaternions calculus, actuator controls, and housekeeping
- **ADCS Case (Optional, Indra Deimos)**
 - Box/ALU structure holding together all the above components with predefined geometry



E-ADCS Variants and Performance

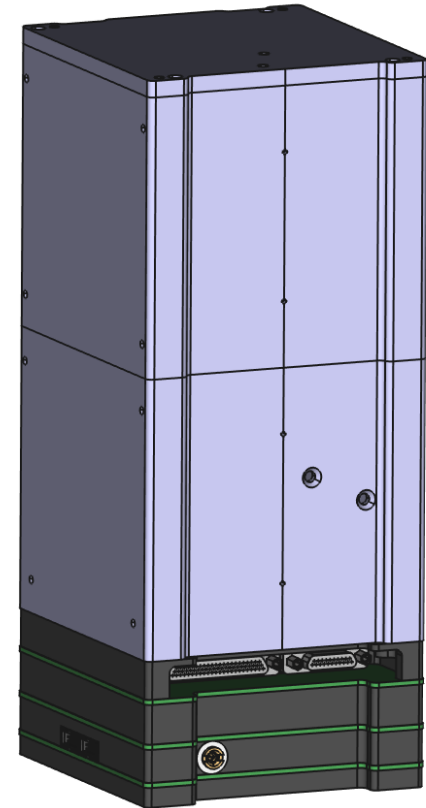


Variant 1: READY-16U, Boxed Version, 6U-16U

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS	VALUE
POINTING ACCURACY	$< 0.05 \text{ DEG} < 180 \text{ ARCSEC}$
POINTING STABILITY	$< 0.017 \text{ DEG/S} < 61.2 \text{ ARCSEC / S}$
ATTITUDE ESTIMATION ACC.	$< 0.042 \text{ DEG} < 150 \text{ ARCSEC}$
ORBIT DETERMINATION ACC.	10 M
AGILITY	$> 1 \text{ DEG / S}$
MASS	2 KG
VOLUME	2.2U
POWER (FINE POINTING MODE)	$< 10 \text{ W}$
LEO LIFETIME	$> 5 \text{ YEARS}$

Variant 2: READY-100

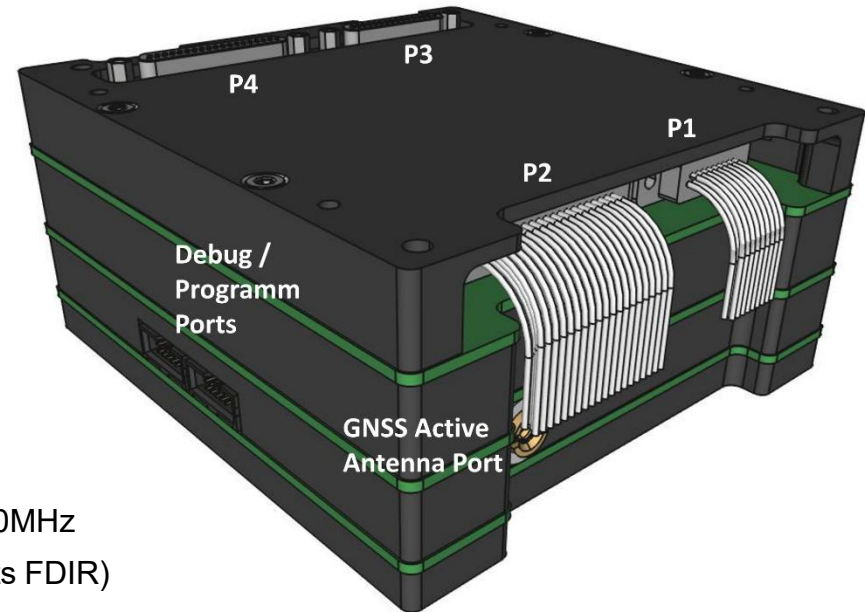
Distributed configuration, microsat $< 75 \text{ kg}$



NANOadcs Architecture



- Consists of 3 vertically stacked and interconnected PCBs
 - **NANOadcs-conn** (top PCB)
 - **NANOadcs-IF** (middle PCB)
 - **NANOadcs-hpm-obc** (bottom PCB)
- Encapsulated within ALU shield (bottom part of the E-ADCS structure in READY-16U variant)

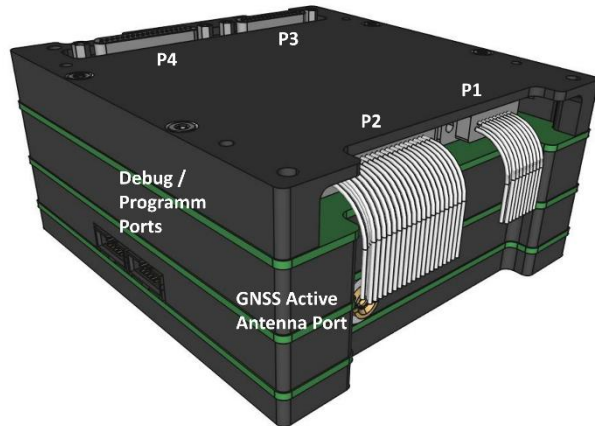


NANOadcs-hpm-obc

- Dual-core RISC-V (RV32IMAF) 32-bit processing platform, @80MHz
- PicoSkyFT softcore processor – Supervisor Module (implements FDIR)
- 256 MB ECC-protected DDR3 RAM.
- 2 GB EDAC-protected NVM storage, 512 MB user-available
- TM data & logs stored in EDAC-protected MRAM NVM (two banks) with 256 kB user-available,.
- Redundant CAN bus using CAN-TS protocol serves as the main TM/TC interface.

NANOadcs Interfaces

- **P1: Platform connector** (power supply input, CAN TM/TC interface, PPS signal output)
- **P2: External ADCS sensors connector** (up to 10 coarse sun sensors, up to 2 fine solar sensors, up to 2 star trackers)
- **P3: Internal ADCS sensors/actuators connector, Deck 1** (2 Reaction Wheels, 1 Magnetorquer bar, 1 Gyro)
- **P4: Internal ADCS sensors/actuators connector** (2 Reaction Wheels, 2 Magnetorquer bars, 1x Magnetometer, 2x Temperature Sensor NTC)



ADCS SENSOR/ACTUATOR	NUMBER OF UNITS	DATA INTERFACE OPTIONS
REACTION WHEEL	4	• CAN (NON REDUNDANT) • RS485
GYROSCOPE	1	• RS422
MAGNETOMETER	1	• RS485 • I2C
STAR TRACKER	2	• RS422 • RS485 • UART
FINE SOLAR SENSOR	2	• RS485 • UART
COARSE SOLAR SENSOR	10	• ANALOG INPUT
MAGNETORQUER	3	• PWM FULL-BRIDGE WITH CURRENT CTRL.
TEMPERATURE SENSORS	2	• ANALOG INPUT
SPARE INTERFACES 1	2	• RS485
SPARE INTERFACES 2	12	• GPIO, 3.3V

E-ADCS Software System



Attitude Determination

- E-ADCS implements a **multi-mode control algorithm** for precise **three-axis attitude control**.
- Up to **2 star trackers** provide primary attitude reference with arc-second accuracy.
- **Extended Kalman Filter (EKF)** integrates star tracker and three-axis gyroscope data for continuous attitude determination.
- **Three-axis magnetometer** supports geomagnetic attitude reference and magnetic control modes.
- **Coarse sun sensors** (optional) assist in initial acquisition and **safe mode operations**.
- **Two fine solar sensors** deliver high-precision sun vector measurements for **solar pointing** or **star tracker backup**.

Control

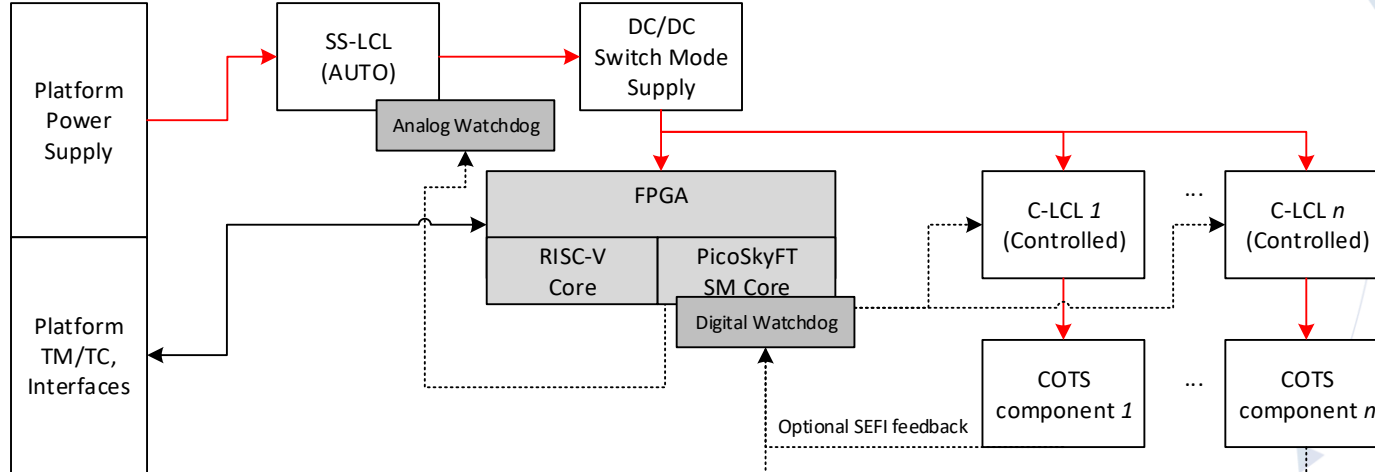
- **Four reaction wheels** provide fine three-axis torque control during normal operations.
- Each wheel features an **internal controller** for speed regulation and torque execution.
- **ADCS flight software** sends **torque commands** to the wheel controllers.
- **RW desaturation** utilizes three PWM-controlled magnetorquer bars



NANOadcs Fault Tolerance, FDIR



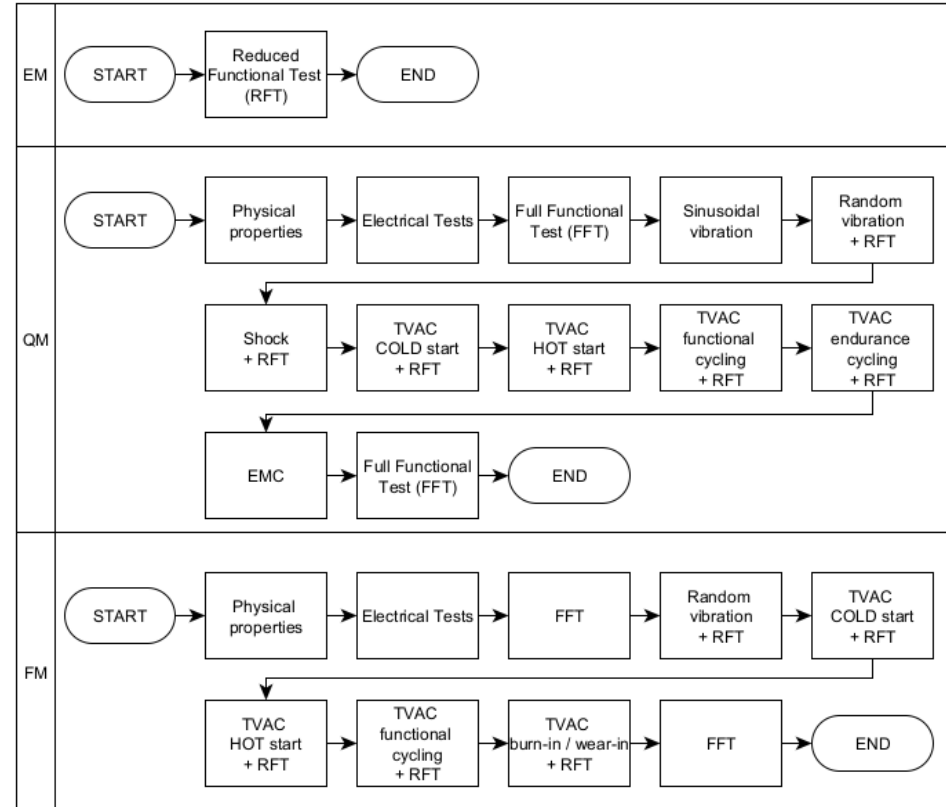
- High reliability via radiation-tested, flight-proven components, building blocks, and advanced FDIR architecture.
- **Supervisor Module (SM)** with PicoSkyFT fault-tolerant core in FPGA.
 - Handles boot, firmware load, TM/TC via CAN, and processor resets.
 - Supports in-mission software reprogramming
 - Manages FDIR, including LCLs for SEL and EDAC DED protection.
 - Hierarchical SEE protection with LCLs, watchdogs, and layered FDIR.
- FPGA safeguarded by SS-LCL, managing COTS components via C-LCLs and watchdogs.



NANOadcs MAIT and Qualification

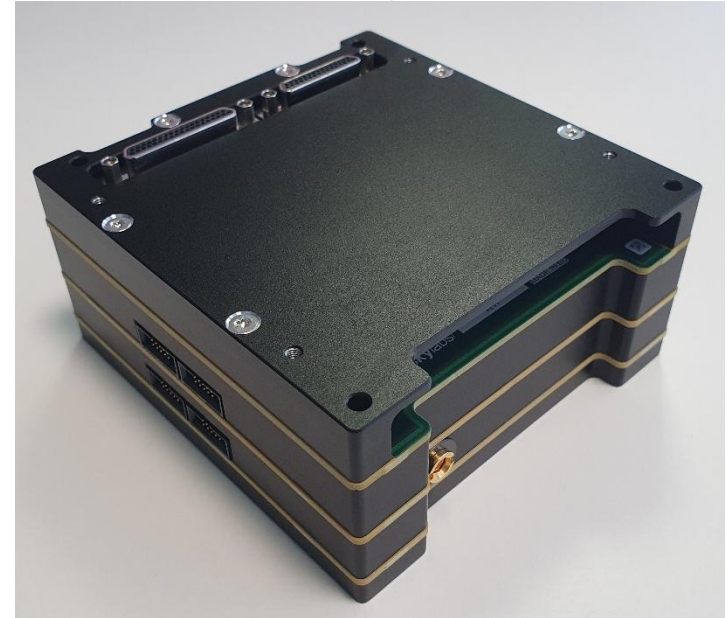


- MAIT: **IPC-A-610 Class 3**
- Qualification and testing will comply with **ISO 19683:2017** and **ECSS-E-ST-10-03** guidelines.
- Model Philosophy:
 - EM, QM, FM

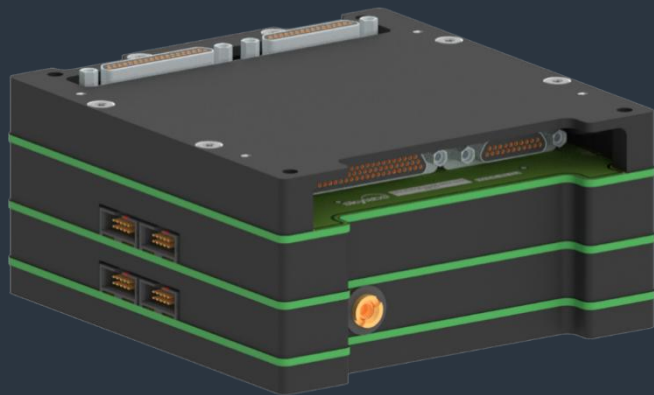


Conclusion

- **E-ADCS** marks a step forward in European small satellite technology.
- Developed by Indra Deimos and SkyLabs under ESA co-funding.
- Provides a **flexible, scalable ADCS for nanosatellites and microsatellites**.
- **NANOadcs core system** ensures high reliability with flight-proven components and advanced FDIR.
- Developed and qualified through standard satellite electronics stages.
- Positioned as a cutting-edge solution for future European space missions.



Thank you!



SkyLabs and Indra Deimos sincerely thank the European Space Agency (ESA) for co-financing the presented work and acknowledges the valuable support and guidance of the ESA technical officers!

Activity: SAT4EOCE-CCN1, ESA Contract No. 4000129462/19/I-LG



Contact:

SkyLabs d.o.o.

Zagrebška cesta 104
SI-2000 Maribor
SLOVENIA

info@skylabs.si

