

DEFCON 28

Whispers Among the Stars

Perpetrating (and Preventing) Satellite Eavesdropping Attacks

James Pavur, DPhil Student

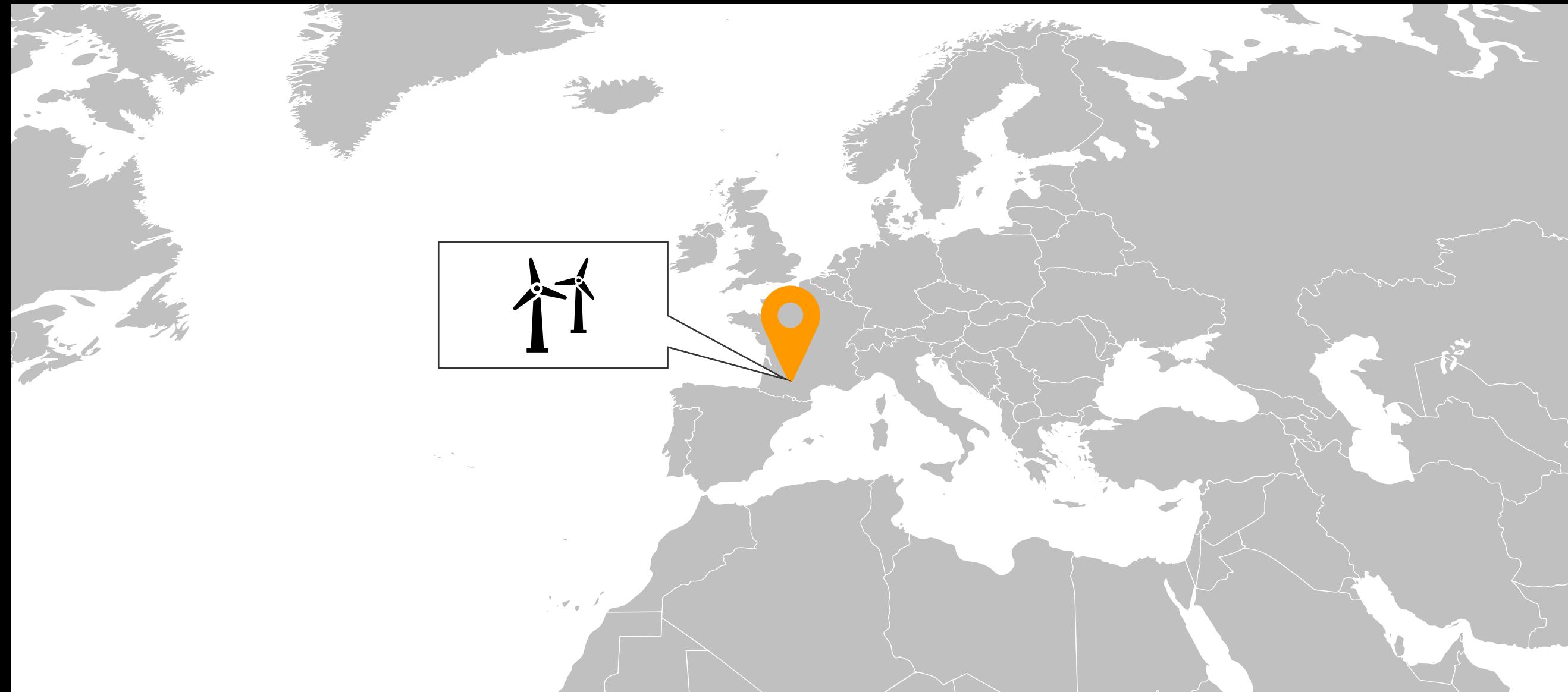
Oxford University, Department of Computer Science

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3



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4



Bio / Contributors

- PhD Student @ Oxford University,
Systems Security Lab
 - Title of (blank) *thesis_draft.tex* file:
*Securing New Space: On Satellite
Cybersecurity*
- Don't Work Alone...
 - Daniel Moser, armasuisse / ETH Zürich
 - Martin Strohmeier, armasuisse /
Oxford University
 - Vincent Lenders, armasuisse
 - Ivan Martinovic, Oxford University



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Lessons from the Past

**Satellite Communication without Privacy
– Attacker’s Paradise**

appeared in *Sicherheit 2005*
Jahrestagung, Fachbereich Sicherheit der Gesellschaft für Informatik, April 5th 2005, Universität Regensburg, LNI Proceedings P-62, pp. 257-268

André Adelsbach and Ulrich Greveler
Horst Görtz Institute for IT Security
Ruhr University Bochum
Germany
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Abstract: In this paper we highlight the fact that a huge amount of information is sent unsecured via satellite broadcast data channels (here: encapsulated in DVB-s). By applying straightforward data analysis it is possible for any attacker equipped with a digital satellite dish and a DVB card PC to derive extensive confidential information on single users (e.g., legal name, banking details, monthly income facts, mail content etc.) as well as to hijack the user’s web identities (e.g., online auction accounts). Many users do not seem to know or to care that broadcasted data can be easily intercepted.

Ruhr-University Bochum, 2005

\$atellite Hacking for Fun & Pr0fit!

Adam Laurie
adam@algroup.co.uk

<http://rfidiot.org>

Black Hat DC, 2009

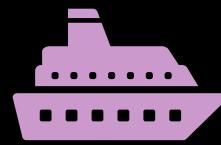


Leonardo Nve Egea
lneve@s21sec.com

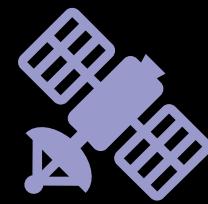
Playing in a Satellite environment 1.2

Black Hat DC, 2010

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3 Domain-
Focused
Experiments



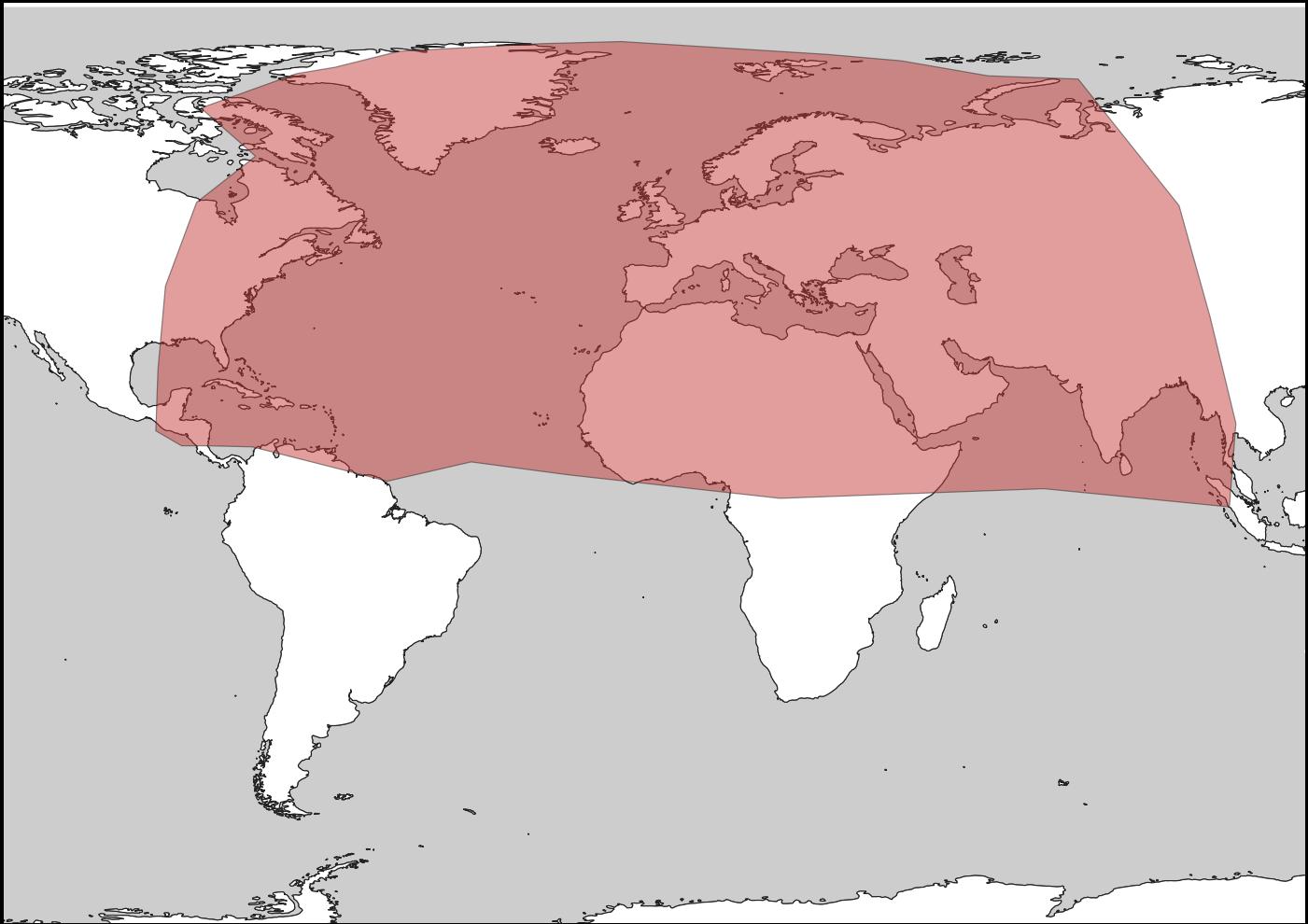
18 GEO Satellites



Coverage Area ~100
million km²

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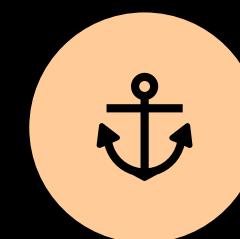
Whose Data?



9 FORTUNE GLOBAL
500 MEMBERS



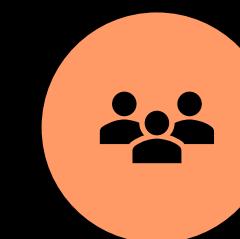
6 OF 10 LARGEST
AIRLINES



~40% MARITIME
CARGO MARKET



GOVERNMENTAL
AGENCIES



YOU?

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3-Minute SATCOM Crash Course

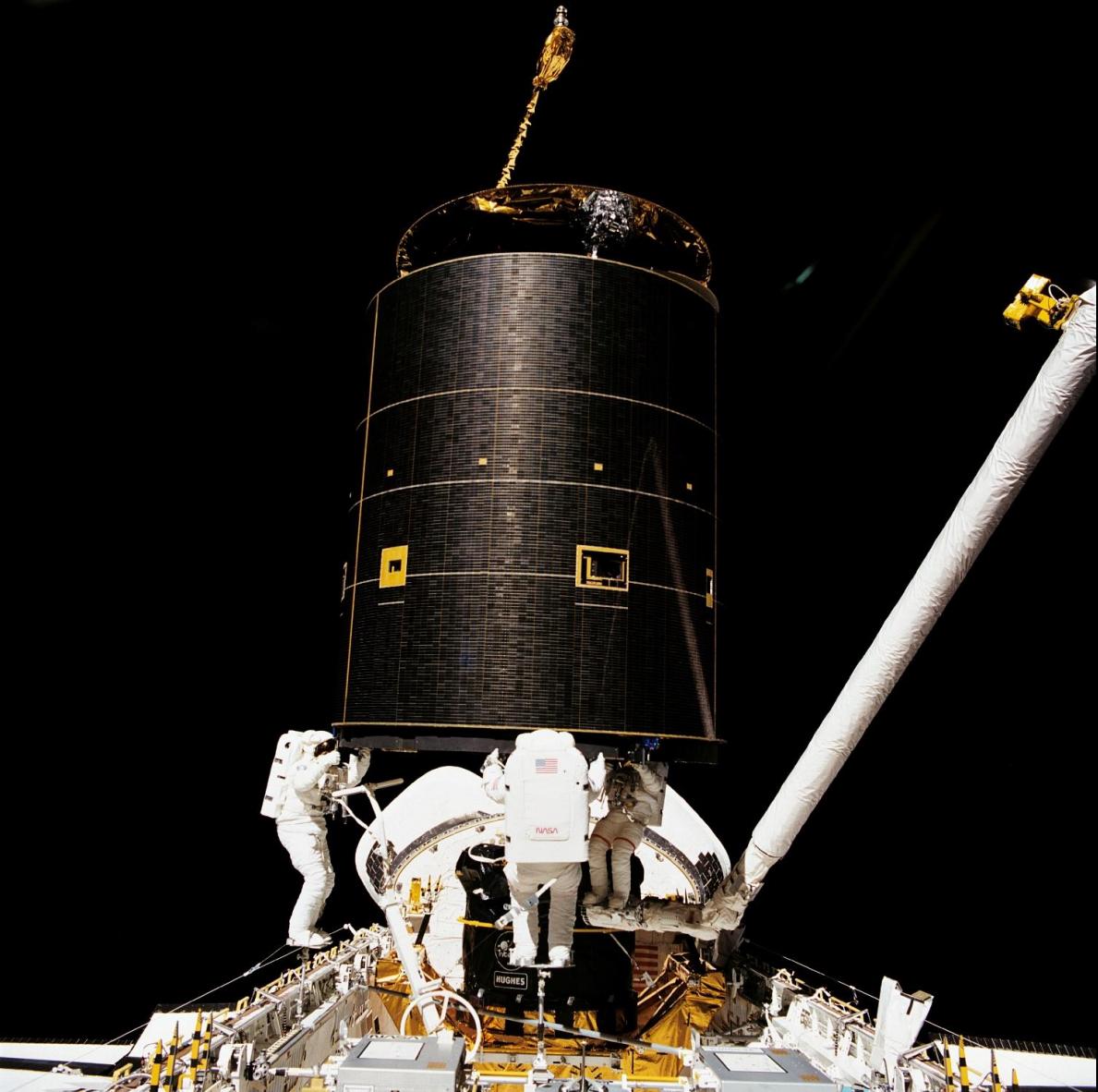
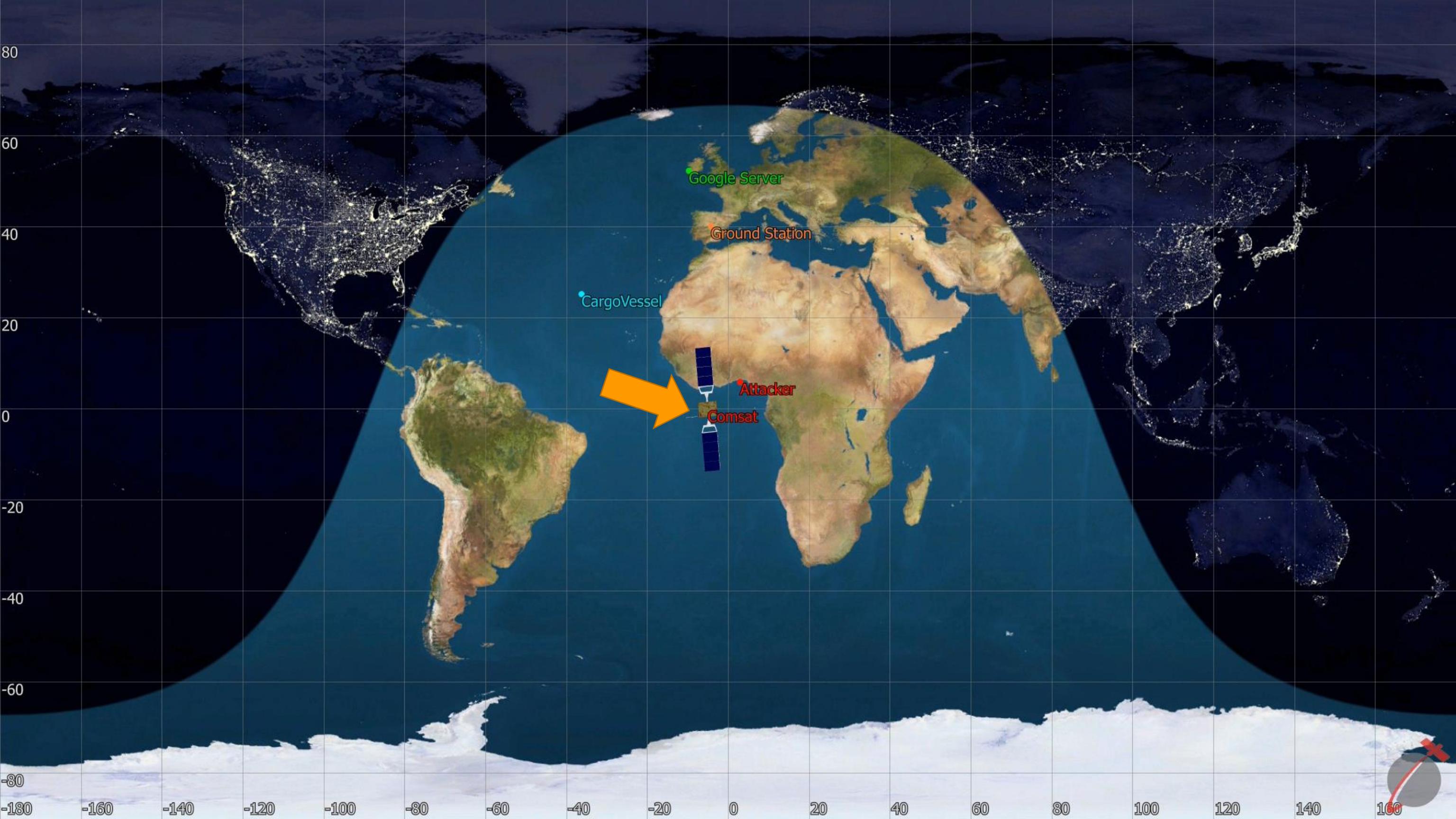
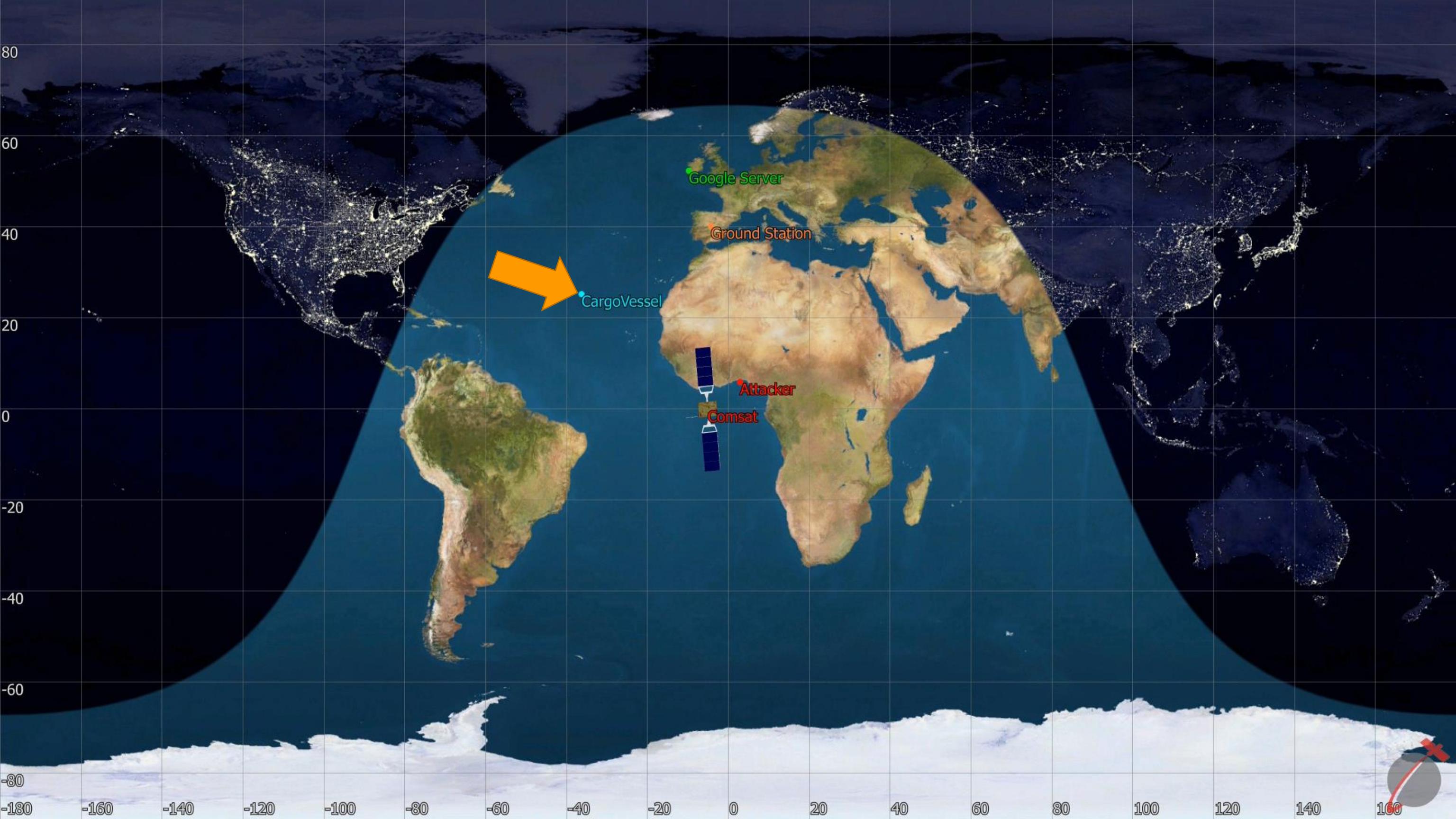
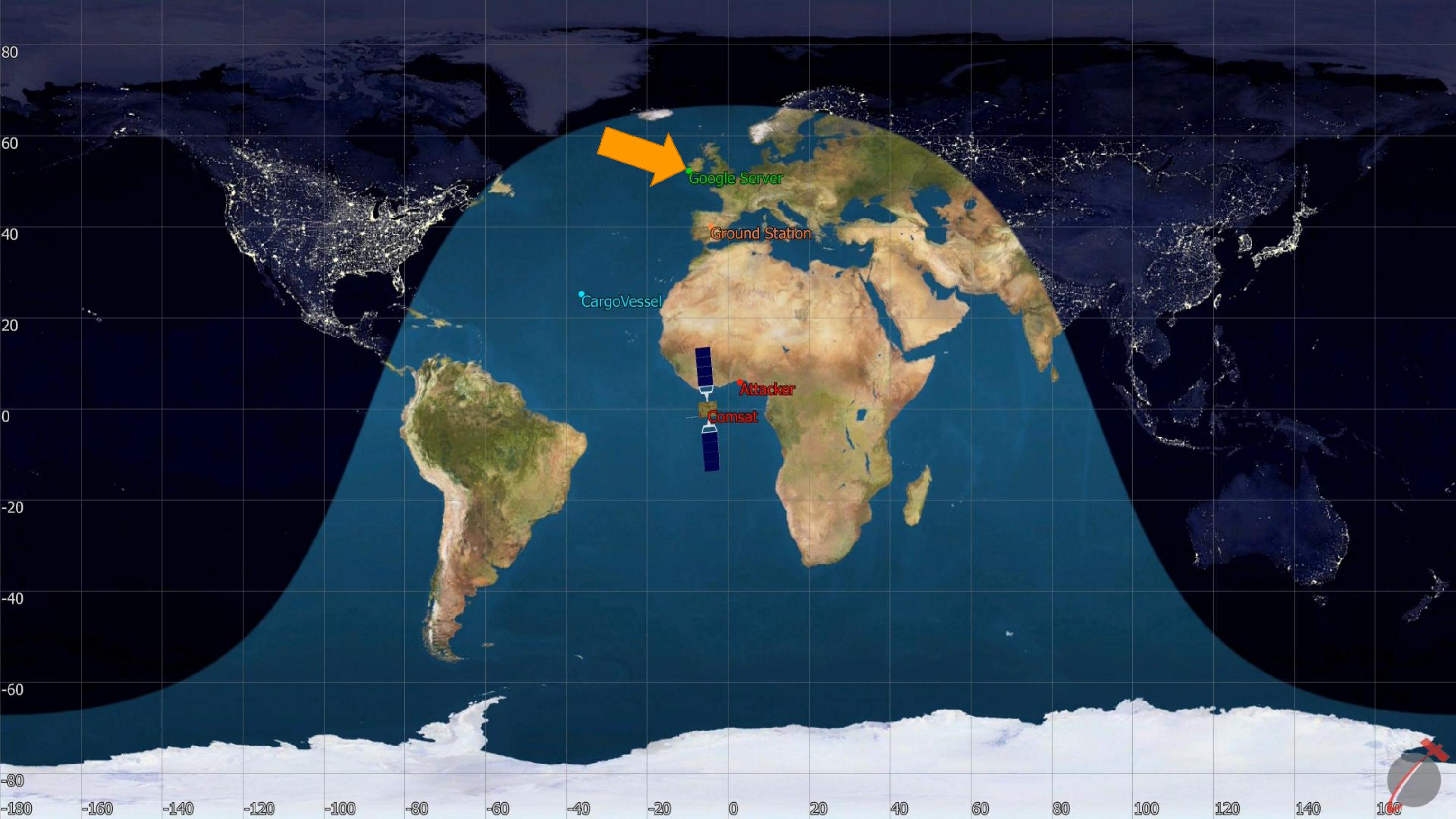


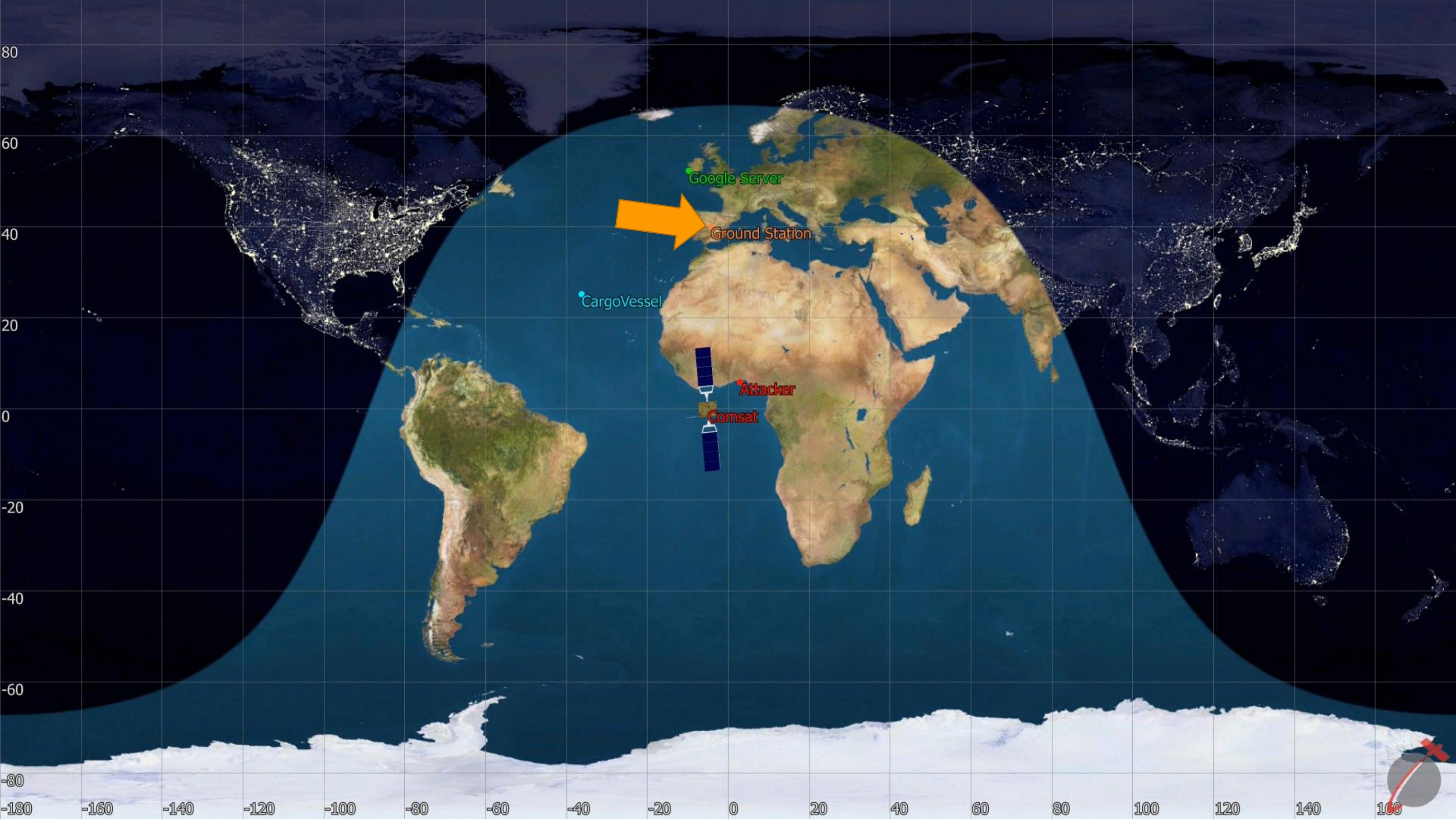
Photo: *Three Crew Members Capture Intelsat VI*, NASA, 1992, Public Domain

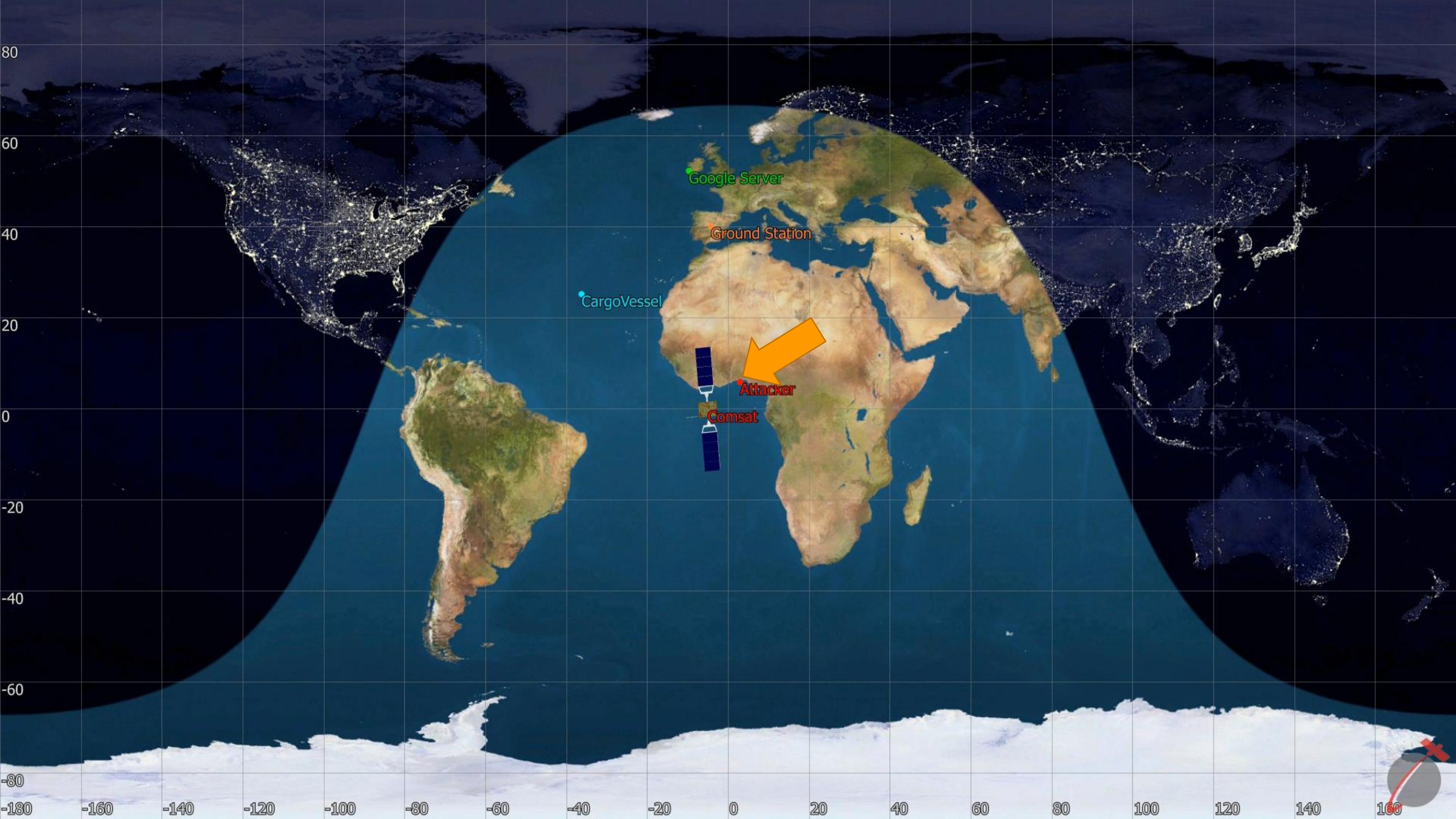
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Ground Station



Comsat





Google Server

Ground Station





Comsat



Ground Station



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Threat Model

Nation-State Actor Tech

MDM9000

Satellite Modem

For Intelligence Gathering, WGS
and Milsatcom Networks



Description

The WGS certified MDM9000 Satellite Modem is the versatile modem that allows service providers and government operations to increase the amount of services or the customer base within the same bandwidth. At the same time it introduces ways to reduce OPEX costs and increase the profitability of your operations at maximum efficiency and optimum availability.

The MDM9000 is optimized for a wide range of fixed and mobile government and defense applications over satellite. The MDM9000 modem is typically installed at both ends of a point-to-point satellite link or at the remote sites of a star network. The unit can act as a modulator, demodulator or modem depending on the network configuration and integrates seamlessly with terrestrial networks and equipment. The modem is in full compliance with the DVB-S2 and the DVB-S2X standard while being backward compatible with our S2 Extensions mode, all in order to achieve barrier-breaking efficiency at maximum service availability. In receiver mode, the MDM9000 serves as demodulator with dedicated intelligence gathering features.



Photo: Het grondstation van de NSO, Wutsje, July 2012, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0

Nation-State Actor Tech

MDM9000

Satellite Modem

For Intelligence Gathering, WGS
and Milsatcom Networks



Description

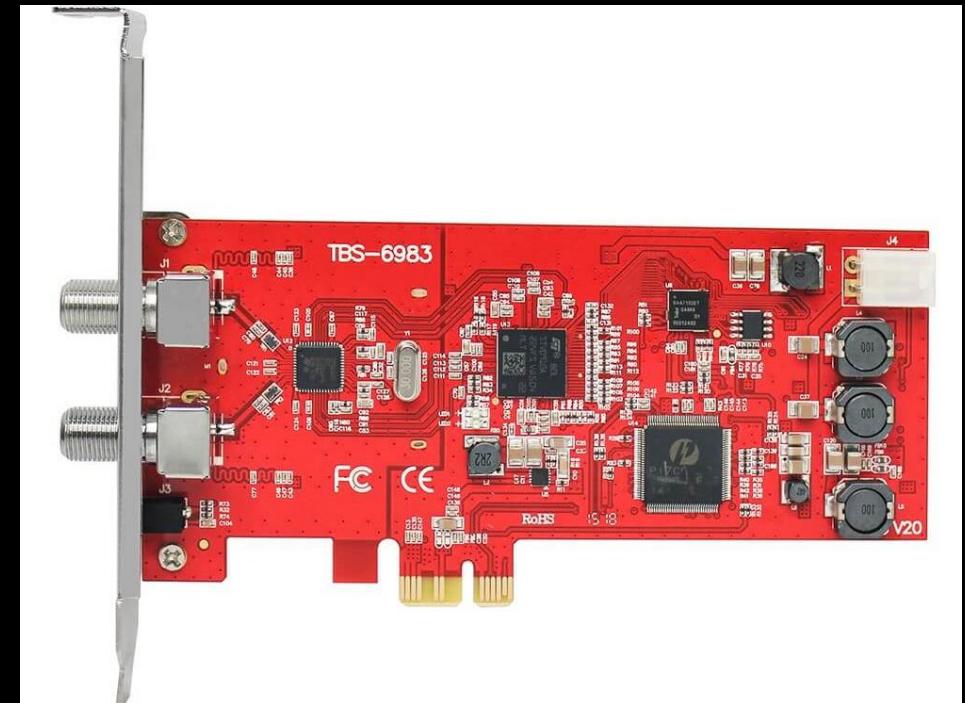
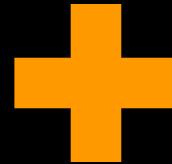
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Photo: Het grondstation van de NSO, Wutsje, July 2012, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0

\$300 of TV Equipment



Selfsat H30D ~\$90 (or any
satellite dish + LNB)

TBS-6983/6903 ~\$200-300
(or comparable PCIe tuner,
ideally with APSK support)



Recycle Bin



Firefox



TBS-BlindS...



TBS-IP-1



TBS-IP-2



EBSpro



VLC media

player

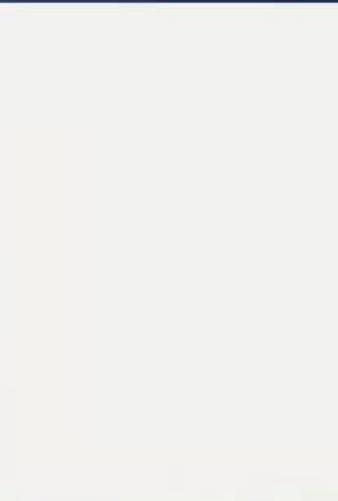


OLD Desktop

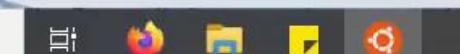


TBS-TSRec...

```
lab@DESKTOP-TRFPEV2: /mnt/c/Users/lab/Desktop
lab@DESKTOP-TRFPEV2:/mnt/c/Users/lab/Desktop$
```



Type here to search



15:04
ENG
04/06/2020

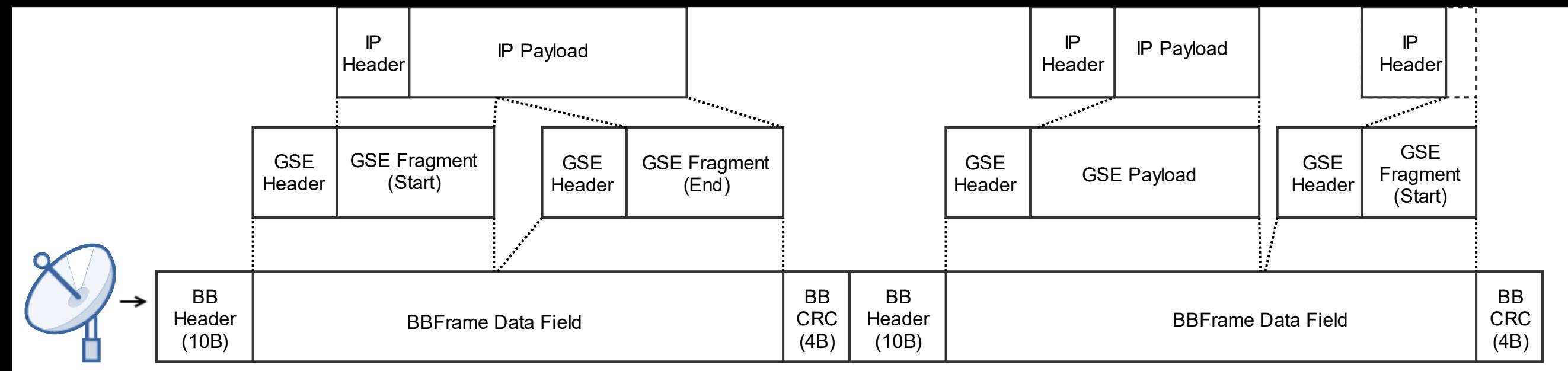
MPEG-TS + MPE/ULE

- Legacy (but still popular) standard
 - Hacked together combination of protocols built for other purposes
- Tools exist for parsing
 - dvbsnoop, tsduck, TSReader
- Primary focus for related work from 2000-2010



GSE (Generic Stream Encapsulation)

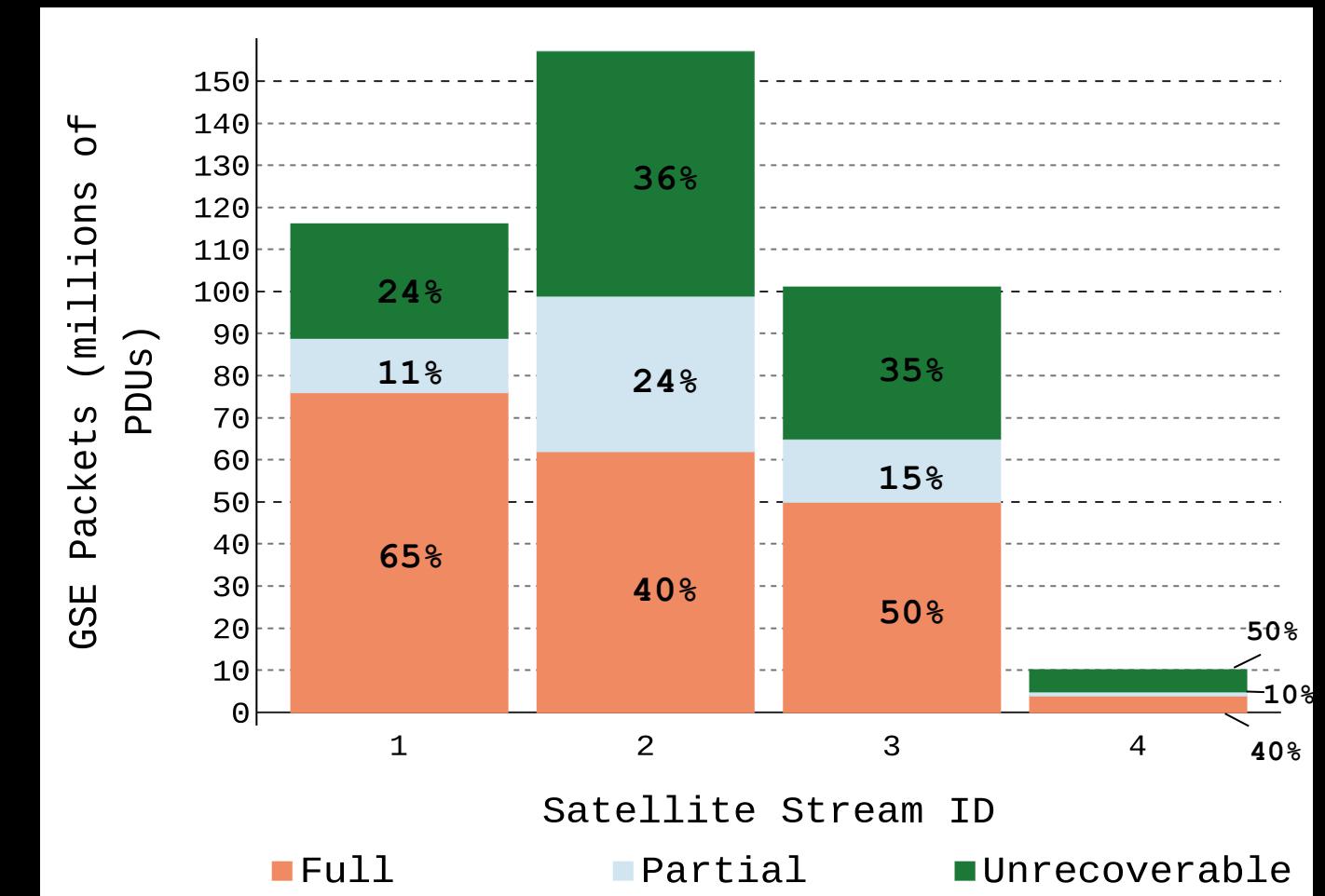
- More modern, popular among enterprise “VSAT” customers
- In practice, networks assume equipment in the \$25k-\$100k range
 - Doesn't work well on our hardware...



GSEExtract

- Custom tool to forensically reconstruct bad recordings
 - Applies simple rules to find IP headers / place fragments
 - <https://doi.ieeecomputersociety.org/10.1109/SP40000.2020.00056>
- Public Release?
 - <https://github.com/ssloxford>

Packet Recovery Rate Using GSEExtract



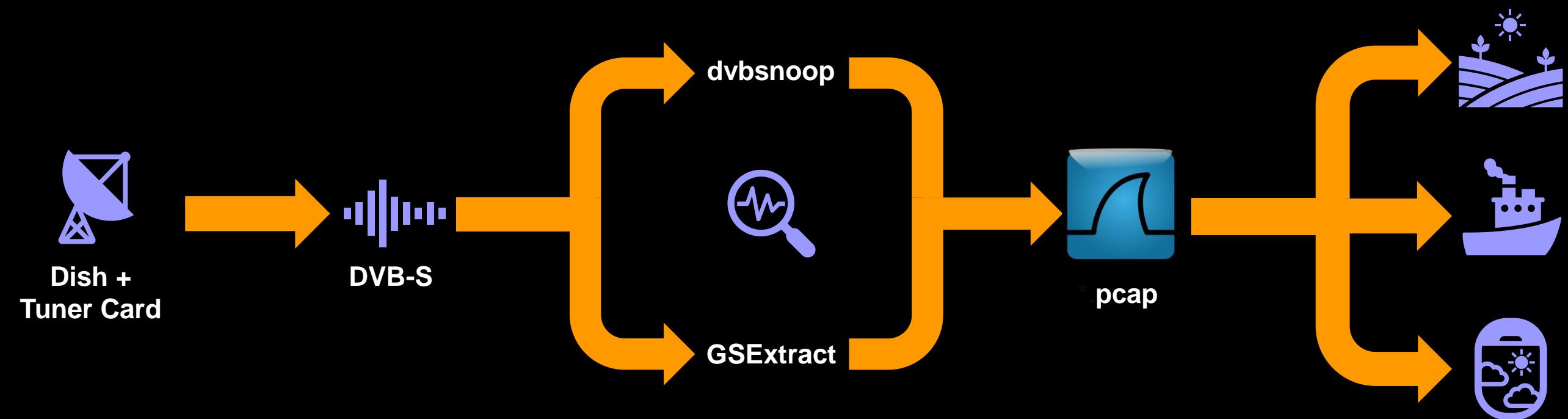
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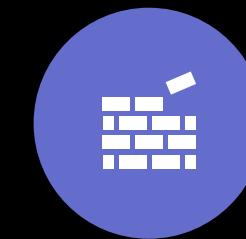
General Findings



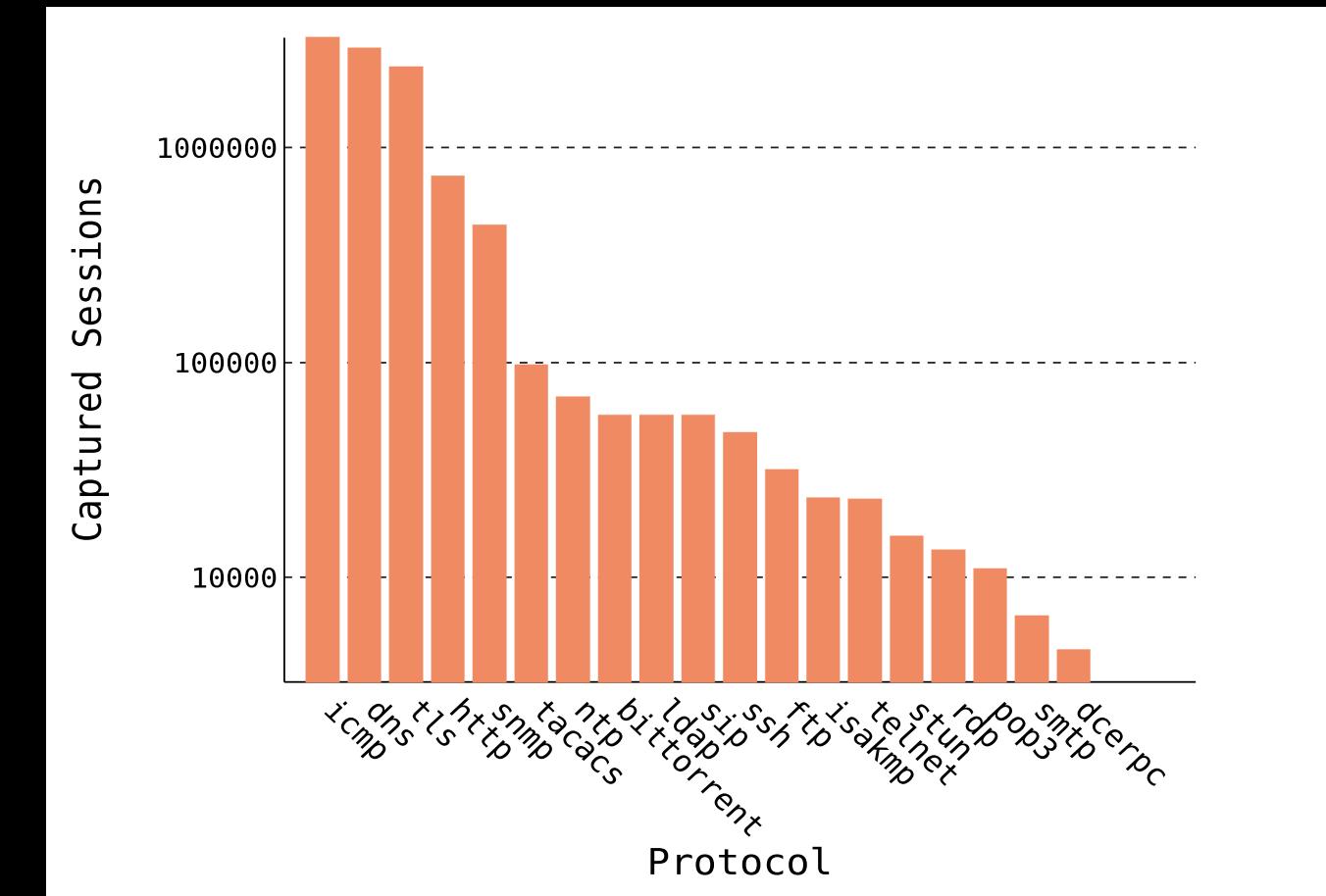
NO DEFAULT
ENCRYPTION



ISP-ESQUE
VANTAGE POINT



BREACH THE
PERIMETER



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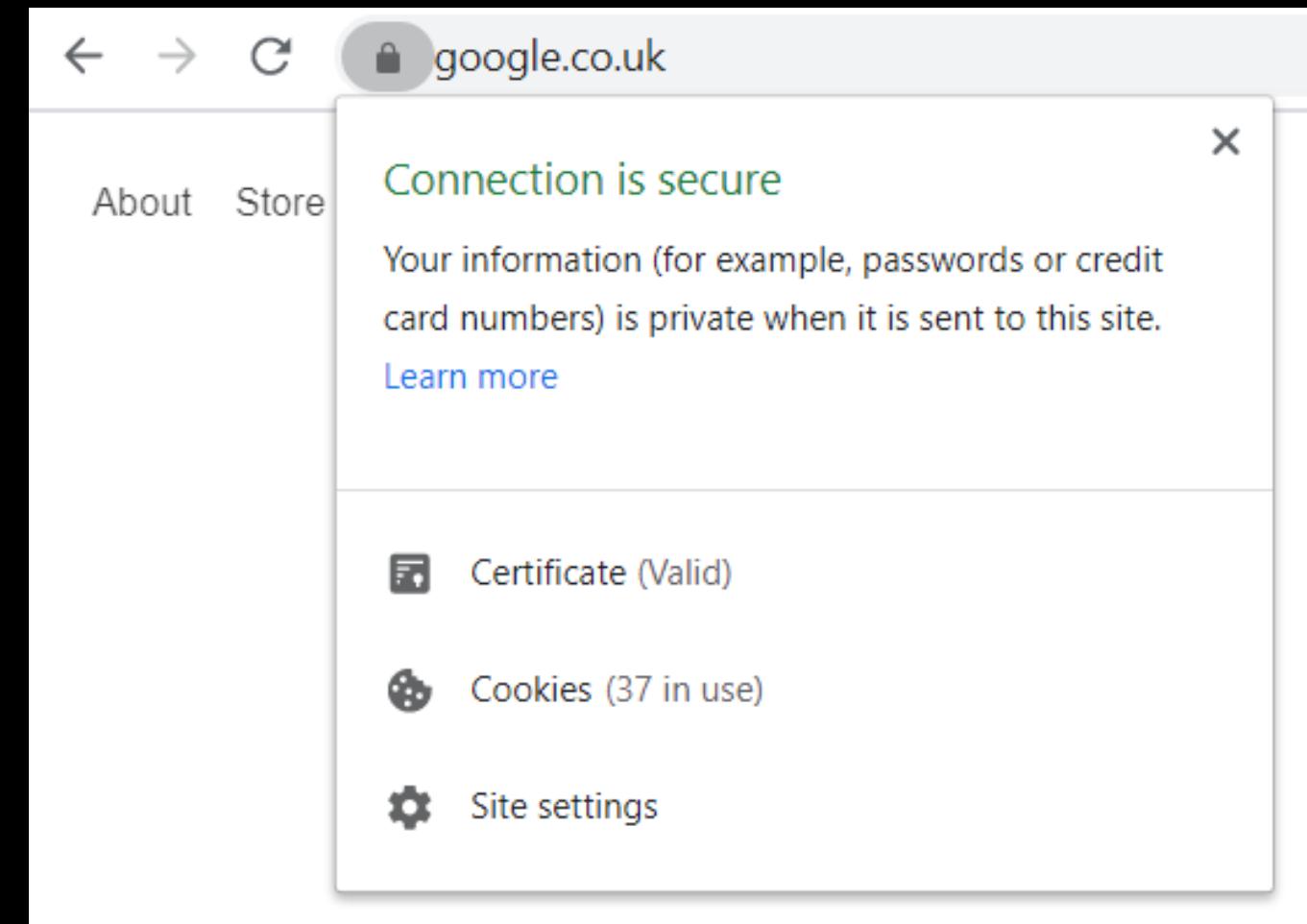
Terrestrial

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TLS == Privacy?



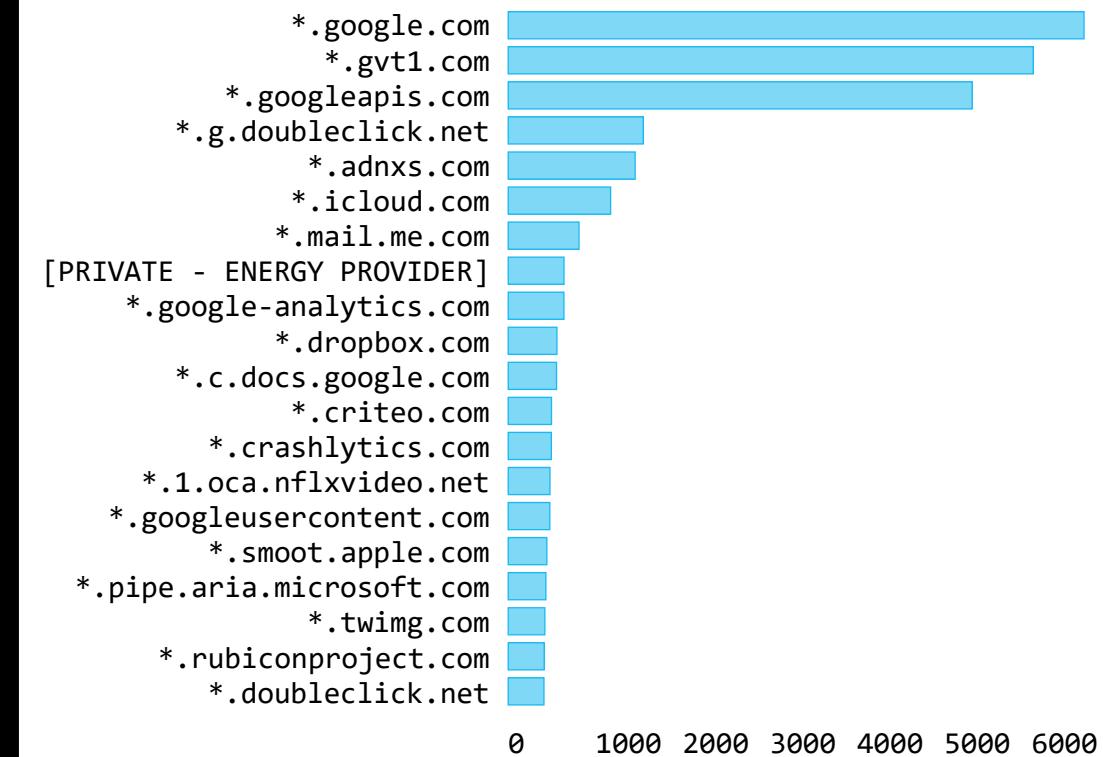
TLS != Privacy

```

> DVB-DATA MultiProtocol Encapsulation
> Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: dns.google (8.8.4.4), Dst: [REDACTED]
> User Datagram Protocol, Src Port: 53, Dst Port: 43667
└ Domain Name System (response)
    Transaction ID: 0x13c2
    > Flags: 0x8180 Standard query response, No error
    Questions: 1
    Answer RRs: 2
    Authority RRs: 0
    Additional RRs: 0
    < Queries
        > bolt.dropbox.com: type A, class IN
    < Answers
        > bolt.dropbox.com: type CNAME, class IN, cname bolt.v.dropbox.com
        > bolt.v.dropbox.com: type A, class IN, addr 162.125.18.133
            [Unsolicited: True]
    > Stuffing

```

Top SSL Certificate Names (MPEG-TS Case Study)



!TLS != Privacy

...=3D"cs80D9435B">E-mail: [REDACTED]</p><p class=3D"csGB..%80D9435B"=..> </p><p class=3D"cs95E872D0"> </p><p cl.vœx>µ»‡7Á...¬..E..®<\$....Ã,¬.".¬.7‡7‡....%....°...G....>. *ass=3D"cs80D9435B">AVISO LEGAL</p><p class=3D"cs80D9435B">Este mensaje va dirigido, de manera exclusiva, a su destinatario y contiene informaci=C3=B3n confidencial y sujeta al secreto profesional; cuya divulgaci=C3=B3n no est=C3=A1 permitida por ley.</p><p class=3D"cs80D=..9435B"><spG...an class=3D"cs19C3E152">En caso de haber recibido este mensaje por error, le rogamos que, de forma inmediata, nos lo comunique mediante este medio o a trav=C3=A9s del tel=CG...3=A9fono (+34) 942 [REDACTED] y proceda a su eliminaci=C3=B3n. Asimismo, le comunicamos que la distribuci=C3=B3n, copia=.. o

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IOT & Critical Infrastructure

```
GET /level/15/exec/-/sh/run/CR HTTP/1.1
Host: 64. [REDACTED]
Authorization: Basic YWRtaW4tZWx1Y3Ryb[REDACTED]
Accept: text/html,application/xhtml+xml,application/xml;q=0.9,*/*;q=0.8
Accept-Encoding: deflate, gzip, identity
Accept-Language: en-US;q=0.6,en;q=0.4
Referer: http://64. [REDACTED]
User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows NT 5.1; rv:9.0.1) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/9.0.1
```

"admin-electro...."



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Maritime

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Case Study: 100 Random Ships



Art: *Rodney's Fleet Taking in Prizes After the Moonlight Battle*, Dominic Serres, Public Domain

~10% of Vessels Identified

Vessel ID*	Vessel Type	Gross Tonnage	Operator Industry	Operator Fleet Size	Example of Identified Client Software Information	Notable Traffic Observations
1	Subsea	22,000t	Oil & Gas	70 Vessels	Specialized Maritime Software	Unencrypted Netlogon Traffic
2	Container	150,000t	Shipping	250 Vessels	PLC Firmware Binaries	“Cargo Hazard A, Major” In Cargo
3	Icebreaker	9,000t	Research	Government	IT Support Software	Unencrypted SMB Fileshares
4	Firefighter	8,000t	Oil & Gas	70 Vessels	Specialized Maritime Software	Unencrypted SQL Database Replication
5	Seismic	8,000t	Seismic	10 Vessels	Antivirus Software & Version	Unencrypted Email Conversations
6	Chemical	5,000t	Shipping	1 Vessel	PLC Firmware Binaries	Unencrypted PLC Firmware Update
7	Outpost (Island)		Research	N/a	OS Minor Version Numbers	Polar Island Research Station
8	Container	33,000t	Shipping	600 Vessels	Messaging Software	Unencrypted REST API Credentials
9	Fishing	1,300t	Fishing	1 Vessel	OS Major Version Numbers	Unencrypted Email Conversations
10	Chemical	17,000t	Shipping	10 Vessels	Specialized Maritime Software	Unencrypted Fileshare Credentials
11	Container	110,000t	Shipping	500 Vessels	Maritime Navigation Software	Unencrypted Email Conversations
12	Subsea	22,000t	Oil & Gas	70 Vessels	Firewall Software & Version	Vulnerable Windows Server 2003

*Note: Vessel names have been withheld and fleet sizes and tonnage are approximate due to privacy concerns.

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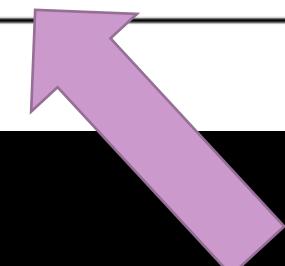
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ECDIS

- Electronic Chart Display and Information System
- Standard Formats Support Cryptographic Verification
 - But we observed more than 15,000 unsigned charts files in transit
- Many also use proprietary formats



Listening Can Be Enough...

Publicly Routable FTP Fileshares

```
> Transmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 21, Dst Port: 41573, S
▼ File Transfer Protocol (FTP)
  ▼ 257 "/Inbox/chartdelivery" is current directory.\r\n
      Response code: PATHNAME created (257)
      Response arg: "/Inbox/chartdelivery" is current directory.
```

Chart Update Via Email

```
-----_Part_64846_1152542406.1556874033574
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="us-ascii"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit

Please save the attached file
(0 [REDACTED].csz) to the following
directory on the ChartCo PC:
'C:\ChartCo\Inbox'
```

(Networked users should browse to their relevant ChartCo Network path e.g.
'G:\ChartCo\Inbox')

Once all attachments have been saved,
open PassageManager and click on the
'Check for New Updates' button at the
foot of the home page in order to import
any new data.

```
-----_Part_64846_1152542406.1556874033574
Content-Type: application/octet-stream;
name="0 [REDACTED].csz"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: base64
Content-Disposition: attachment;
filename="0 [REDACTED].csz"
```

General Privacy

Captain of Billionaire's Yacht – MSFT Acct.

Subject: Microsoft account password reset
To: captain@[REDACTED].com
X-Priority: 3
X-MSAPipeline: MessageDispatcherEOP
Message-ID: [REDACTED]
X-MSAMetaData:
=?us-ascii?q?[REDACTED]
=?us-ascii?q?[REDACTED]
=?us-ascii?q?[REDACTED]
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary=" [REDACTED]"
Return-Path: account-security-noreply@accountprotection.microsoft.com
X-EOPAttributedMessage: 0
X-Forefront-Antispam-Report:

Guests & Crew / Lunch Orders?

2nd
Engineer", "phone": null, "createdDate": 1555016097, "inactive": false, "pictureUrl": null, "presenceLog":
{"id": [REDACTED], "crewmemberId": [REDACTED], "present": true, "date": 1556830579},
{"id": [REDACTED], "groupId": 1 [REDACTED], "idealD": null, "badgeld": null, "order": 39, "lunchOrder": null, "firstName": "H [REDACTED]", "lastName": "D [REDACTED]", "job": "Chief Stewardess", "phone": null, "createdDate": 1556961769, "inactive": false, "pictureUrl": null},
{"id": [REDACTED], "groupId": 1 [REDACTED], "idealD": null, "badgeld": null, "order": 40, "lunchOrder": null, "firstName": "M [REDACTED]", "lastName": "K [REDACTED]", "job": "Stewardess", "phone": null}

General Privacy

POS Traffic From Cruise Ships

..116 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 02B34;37
.AMERICA N EXPRES
S.30 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 100.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
00Y.NNN. 000000.0
[REDACTED]

Crew Passport Data Transmitted to Port Authorities

CID Number [REDACTED] Rank: COFF Name: S [REDACTED] N

Passport: Z [REDACTED] Issued: 05 [REDACTED] Expiry: 04 [REDACTED]

Seaman book: [REDACTED] Issued: 04 [REDACTED] Expiry: 03 [REDACTED]

Nationality: [REDACTED] Date of birth: [REDACTED] Place of birth: [REDACTED]

CID Number [REDACTED] Rank: 20FF Name: [REDACTED] UL

Passport: R [REDACTED] Issued: 14 [REDACTED] Expiry: 13 [REDACTED]

Seaman book: [REDACTED] Issued: 24 [REDACTED] Expiry: 23 [REDACTED]

Nationality: [REDACTED] Date of birth: [REDACTED] Place of birth: [REDACTED]

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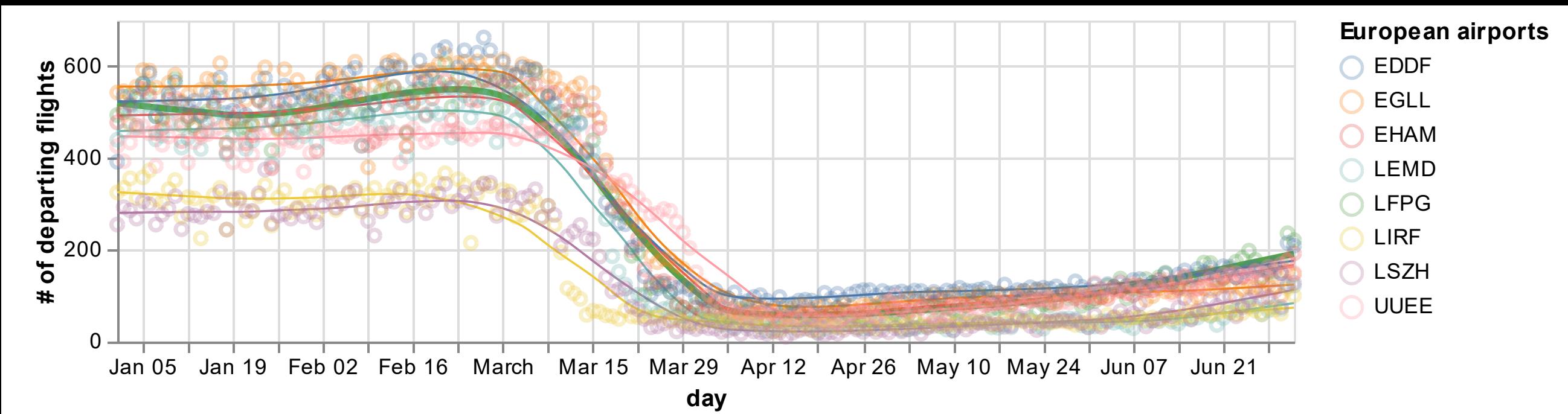


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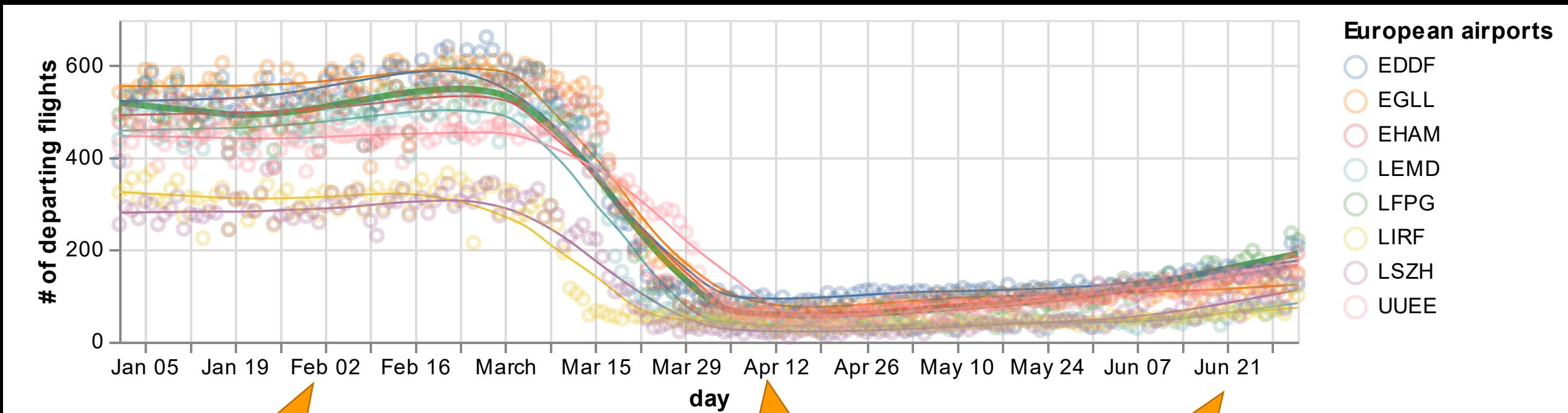
Aviation



Where Did the Planes Go?



Where Did the Planes Go?



Lots of Useless
Nonsense (e.g.
Instagram Traffic)

Almost Entirely
Essential Traffic

People Who Really
Need to Travel

Crossing the “Red Line”

The screenshot shows the IOActive website with a navigation bar including BLOGS, CONTACT US, and social media links. Below the navigation is a horizontal menu with SERVICES, INDUSTRIES, RESOURCES, CAREERS, and WHO WE ARE. A timestamp at the top indicates the research was published on DECEMBER 20, 2016. The main content is an article titled "In Flight Hacking System" by Ruben Santamarta. To the right of the article is a diagram of an aircraft's network architecture. The diagram illustrates a central backbone connecting various functional domains: Aircraft Control Domain (red), Airline Information Services (green), Passenger Information & Entertainment Services (purple), and Passenger Owned Devices (light purple). The backbone also connects to specific systems like Control the Aircraft, Airline Operations, and Entertain the Passenger. A red vertical line, labeled "Red Line" in the original image, runs through the diagram, highlighting the boundary between the aircraft control domain and the passenger information and entertainment domains.

“A primary concern is the sharing of these SATCOM devices between different data domains, which could allow an attacker [...] to pivot from a compromised IFE to certain avionics”

The Loneliest EFB

```
T [REDACTED] -> 10.48.[REDACTED]:50684 [AFP] #127
HTTP/1.0 302 Moved Temporarily..Content-Type: text/html..Location:
http://172.[REDACTED]:80?&userurl=http://efb.[REDACTED]/efb/api/v1/taskSheet/getUnsavedTsCaptains.do?soflSeqNrs=[REDACTED]
&fltNrs=[REDACTED]&schDepDts=[REDACTED]
&depCds=[REDACTED]&PVG&arrvCds=PVG,[REDACTED]

T [REDACTED]:80 -> 10.48.[REDACTED]:61044 [AFP] #913
HTTP/1.0 302 Moved Temporarily..Content-Type: text/html..Location:
http://172.[REDACTED]:80?&userurl=http://efb.[REDACTED]/efb/api/v1/flightPlan/getWayPoint.do?fltNr=[REDACTED]
&tailNr=[REDACTED]
&alnCd=[REDACTED]&depCd=[REDACTED]&arrvCd=PEK&rescheduledFltDt=[REDACTED]&soflSeqNr=[REDACTED]

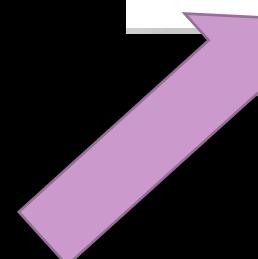
T [REDACTED] -> [REDACTED]:55070 [AFP] #820
HTTP/1.0 302 Moved Temporarily..Content-Type: text/html..Location:
http://172.[REDACTED]:80?&userurl=http://efb.[REDACTED]/efb/api/v1/weather/sweatherquery.do?latitude=56.[REDACTED]&longitude=[REDACTED]
```



Photo: Gulfstream Aerospace G150, Robert Frola, 2011, Flickr, GFDL.

GSM @ 30,000ft

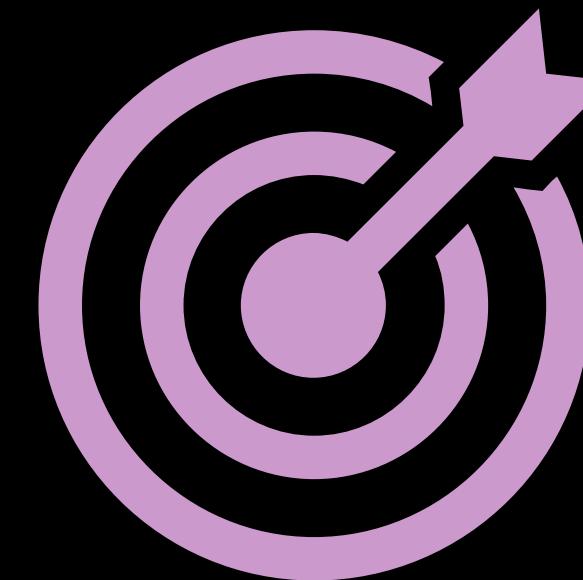
```
> UTRAN Iuh interface RUA signalling
> Radio Access Network Application Part
> GSM A-I/F DTAP - CP-DATA
> GSM A-I/F RP - RP-DATA (Network to MS)
▼ GSM SMS TPDU (GSM 03.40) SMS-DELIVER
    0.... .... = TP-RP: TP Reply Path parameter is not set in this SMS SUBMIT/DELIVER
    .1... .... = TP-UDHI: The beginning of the TP UD field contains a Header in addition to the short message
    ..0. .... = TP-SRI: A status report shall not be returned to the SME
    .... 0... = TP-LP: The message has not been forwarded and is not a spawned message
    .... .0.. = TP-MMS: More messages are waiting for the MS in this SC
    .... ..00 = TP-MTI: SMS-DELIVER (0)
> TP-Originating-Address - [REDACTED]
> TP-PID: 0
> TP-DCS: 8
> TP-Service-Centre-Time-Stamp
    TP-User-Data-Length: (140) depends on Data-Coding-Scheme
▼ TP-User-Data
    > User-Data Header
        SMS text: Name: [REDACTED] 0\nTest Result: Negative - \nResult Date: [REDACTED]
```



DEFCON 28

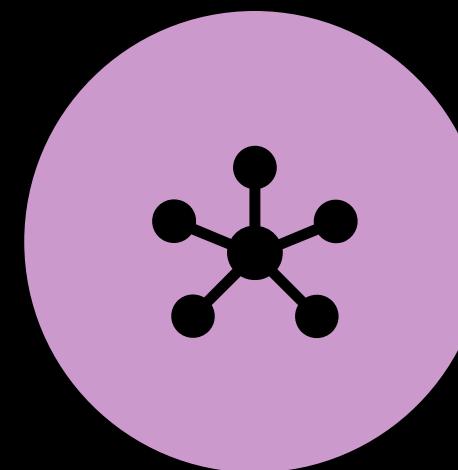
08-082020

52

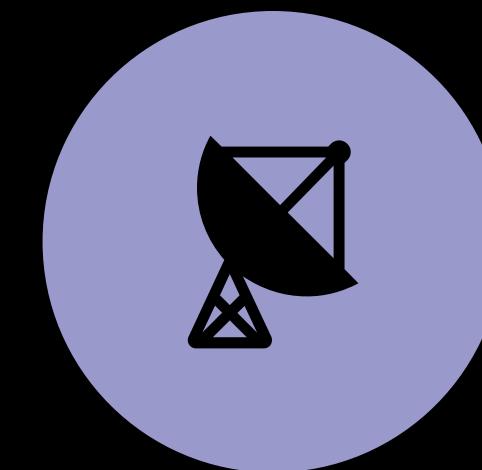


Active
Attacks?

“Untraceable” Exfiltration: Requirements



ROUTE FROM COMPROMISED
HOST TO SATELLITE IP



DISH INSIDE FORWARD LINK
FOOTPRINT

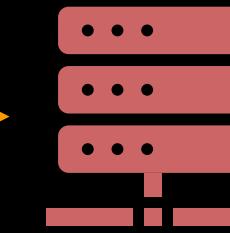
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54



Compromised PC

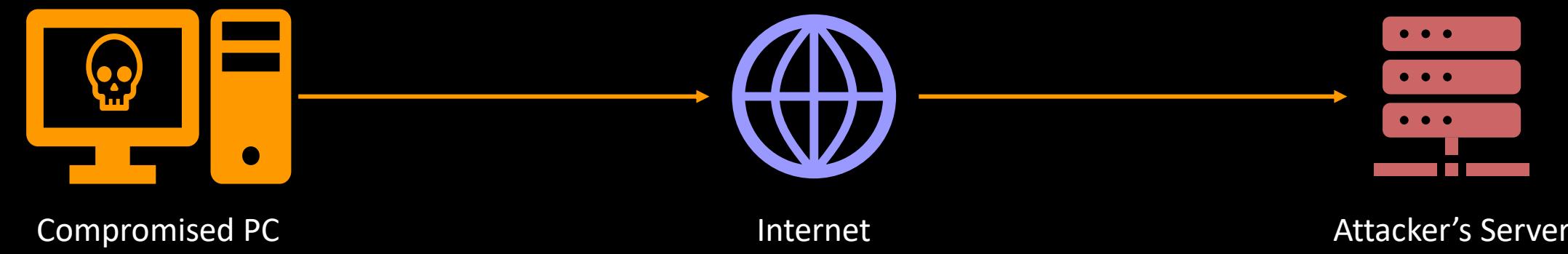


Attacker's Server

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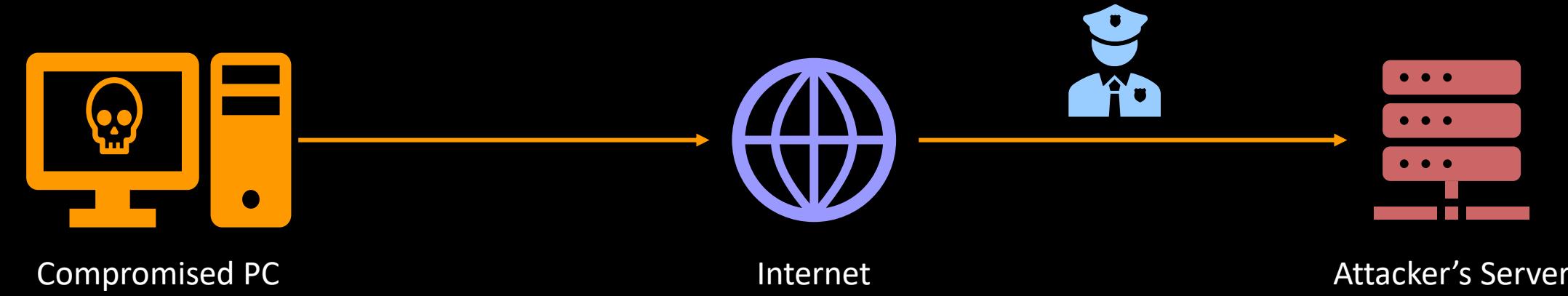
55



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08-082020

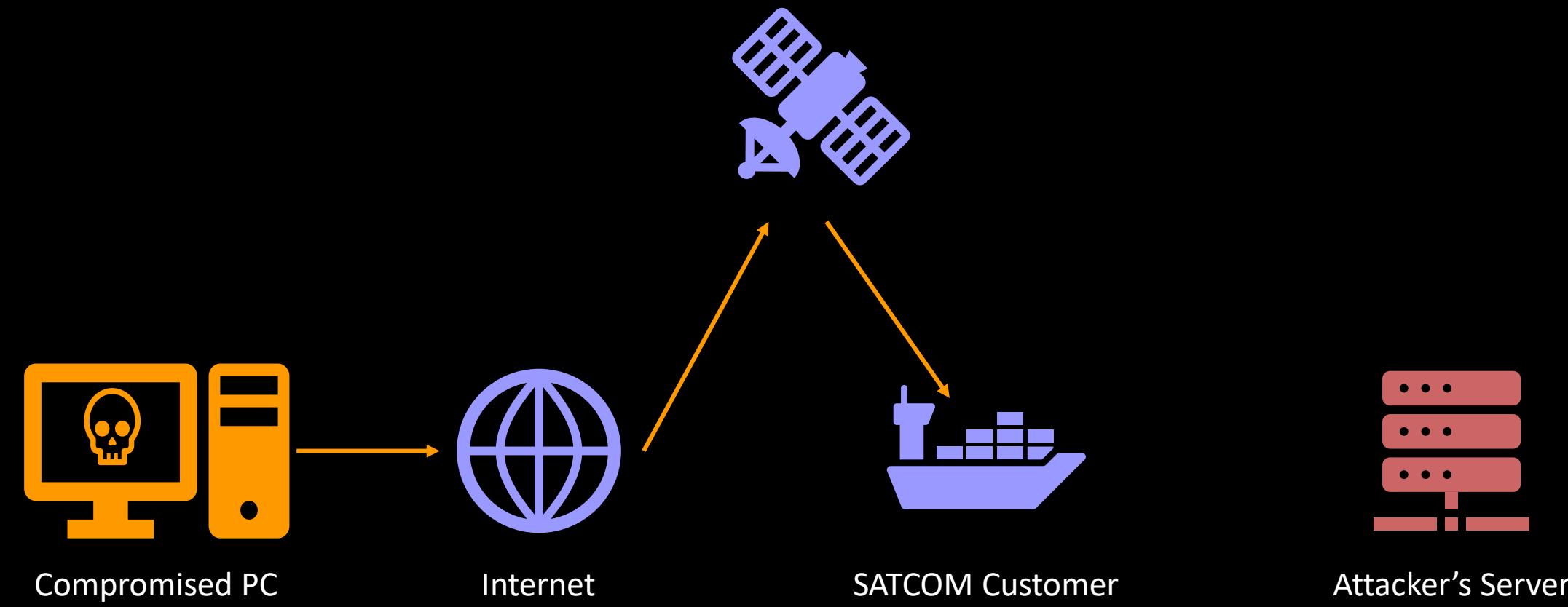
56

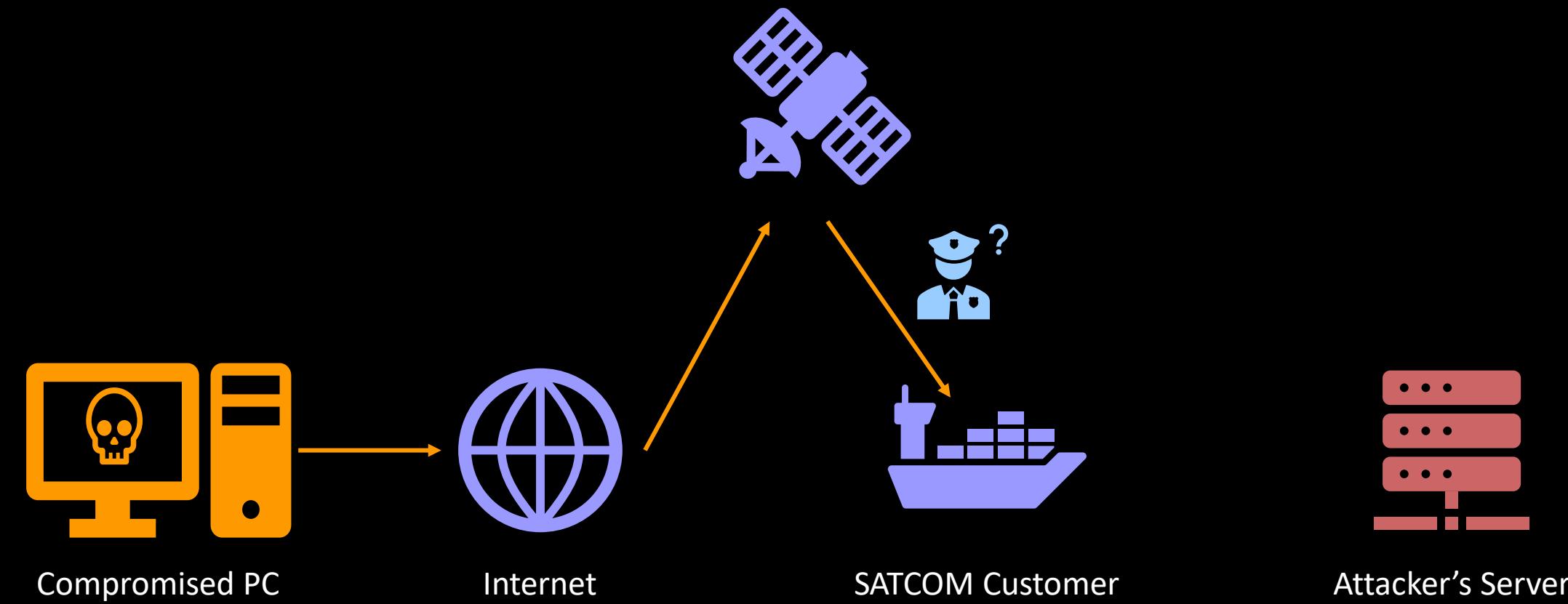


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57

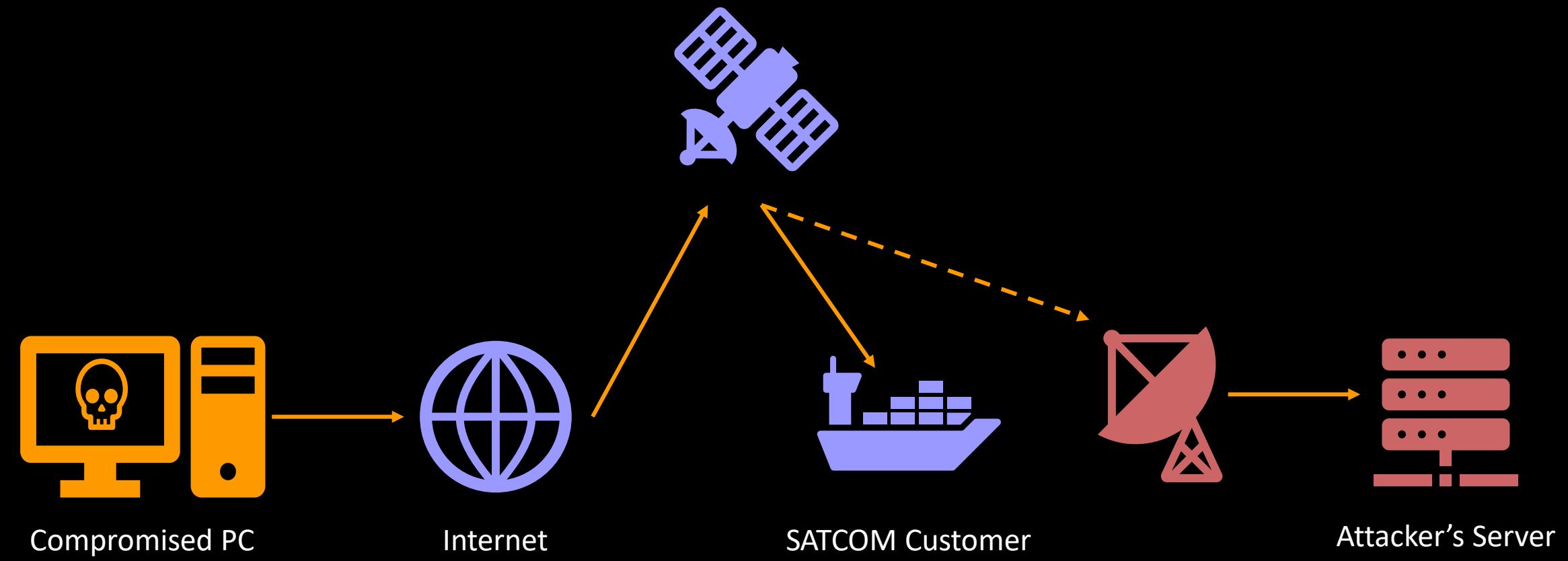




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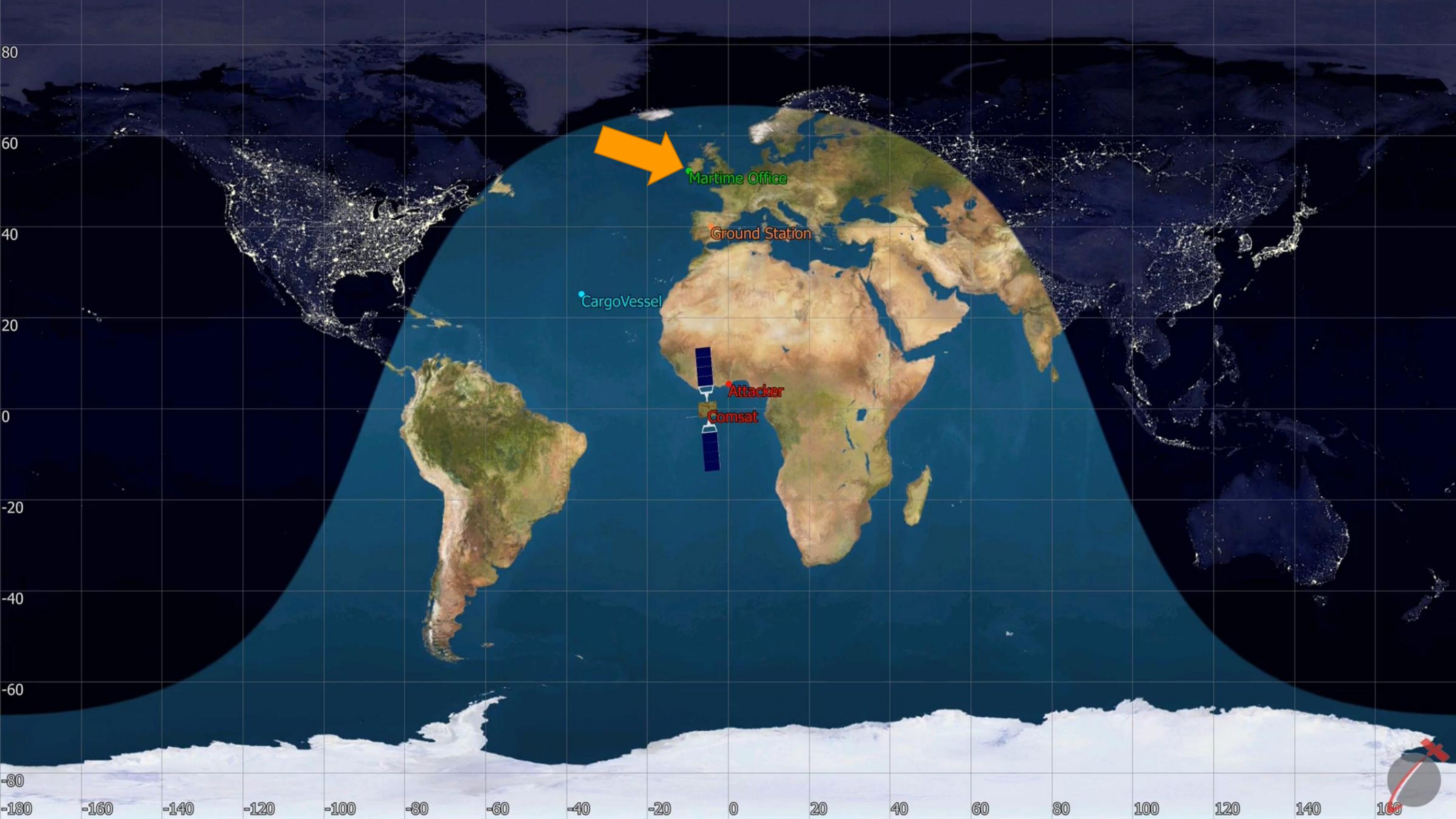
59

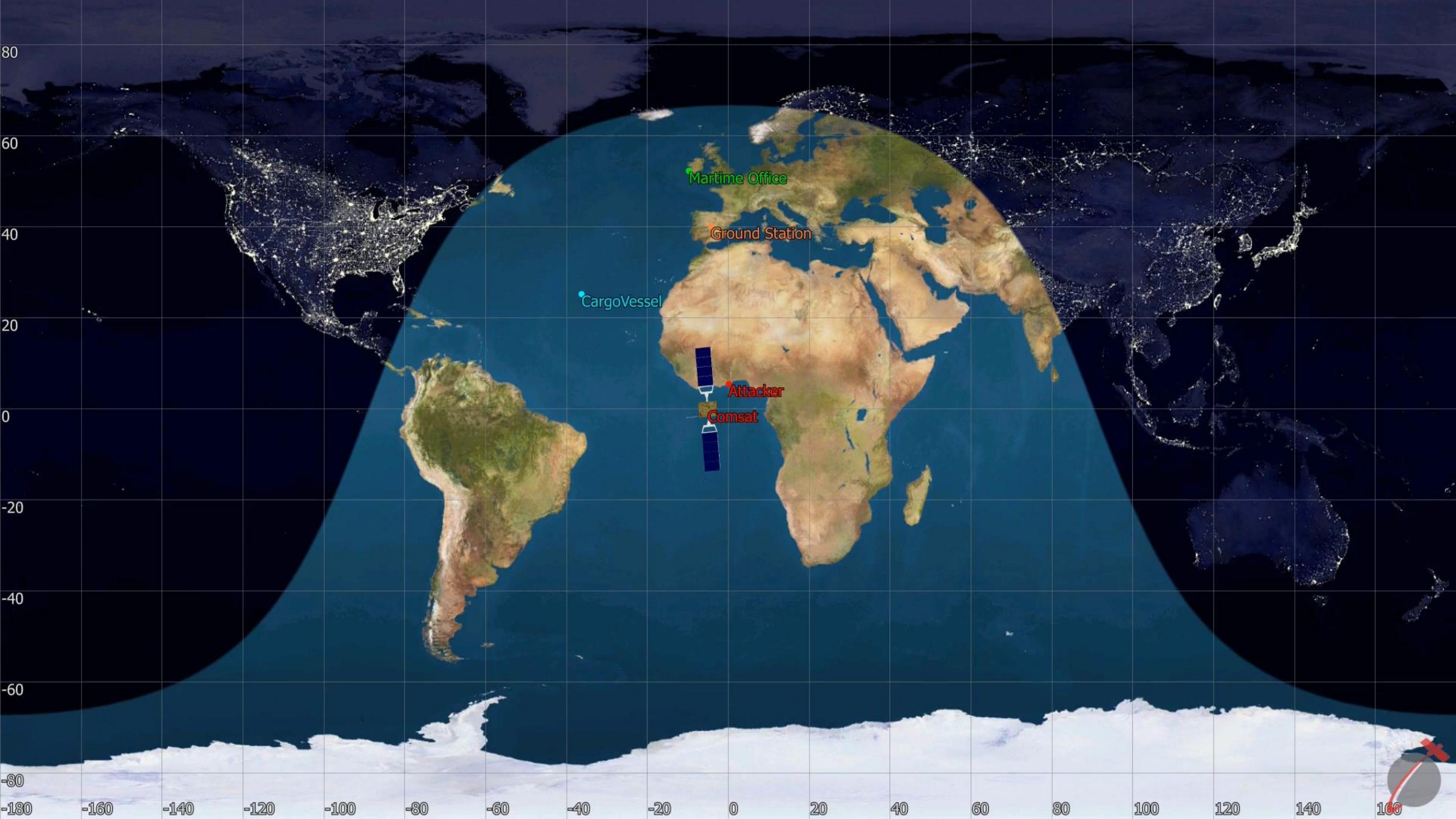


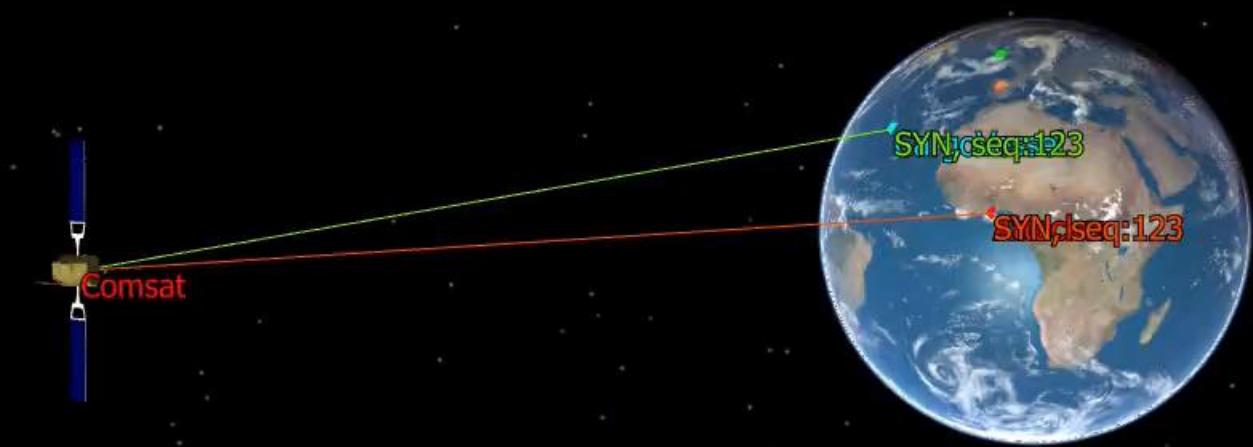
TCP Session Hijacking

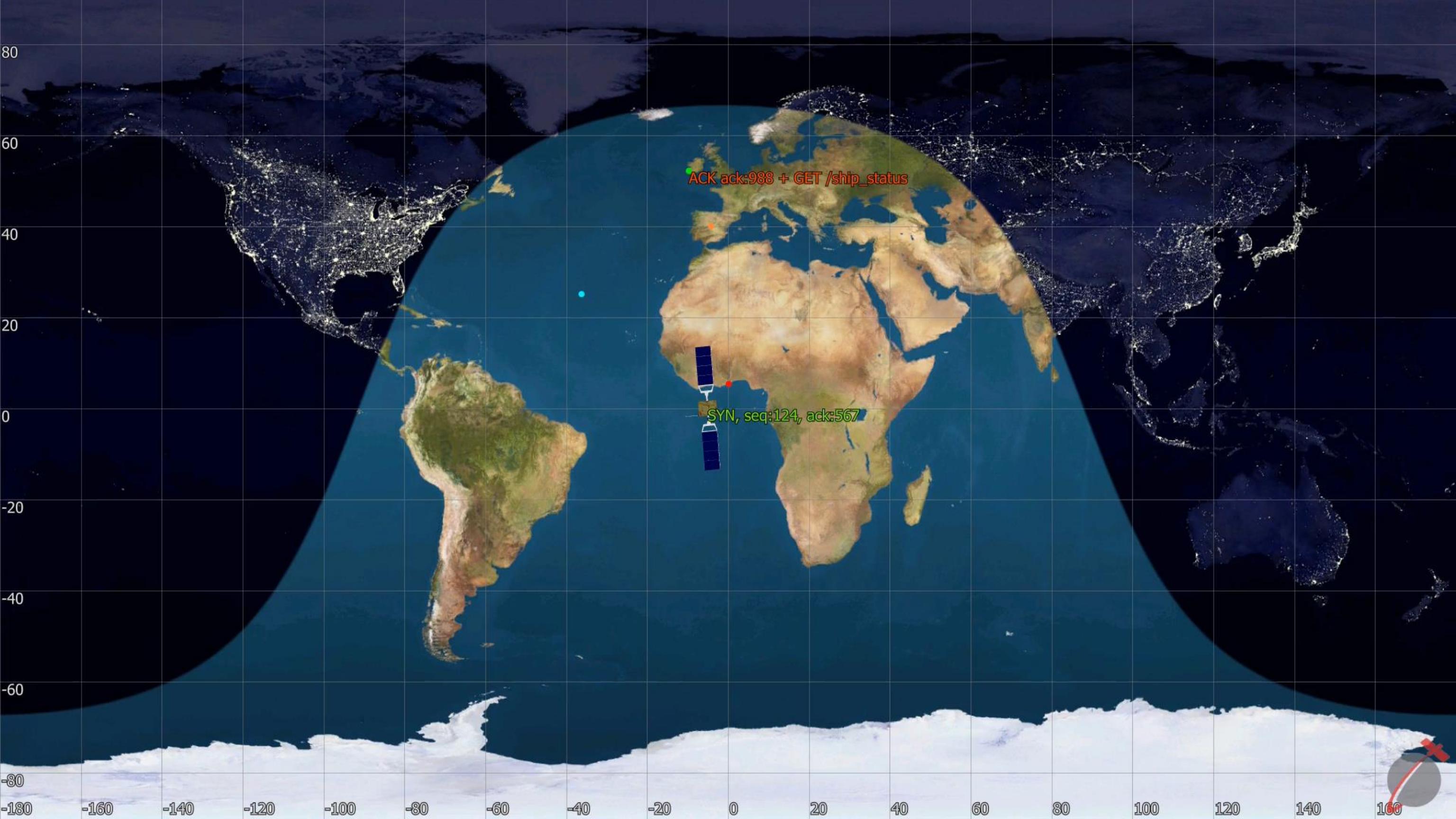
- Snoop TCP sequence numbers
- Impersonate satellite-terminal conversation endpoint
 - Possibly bi-directional, but more complex
- Network Requirements
 - IPs must be routable to attacker
 - No TCP sequence number altering proxies

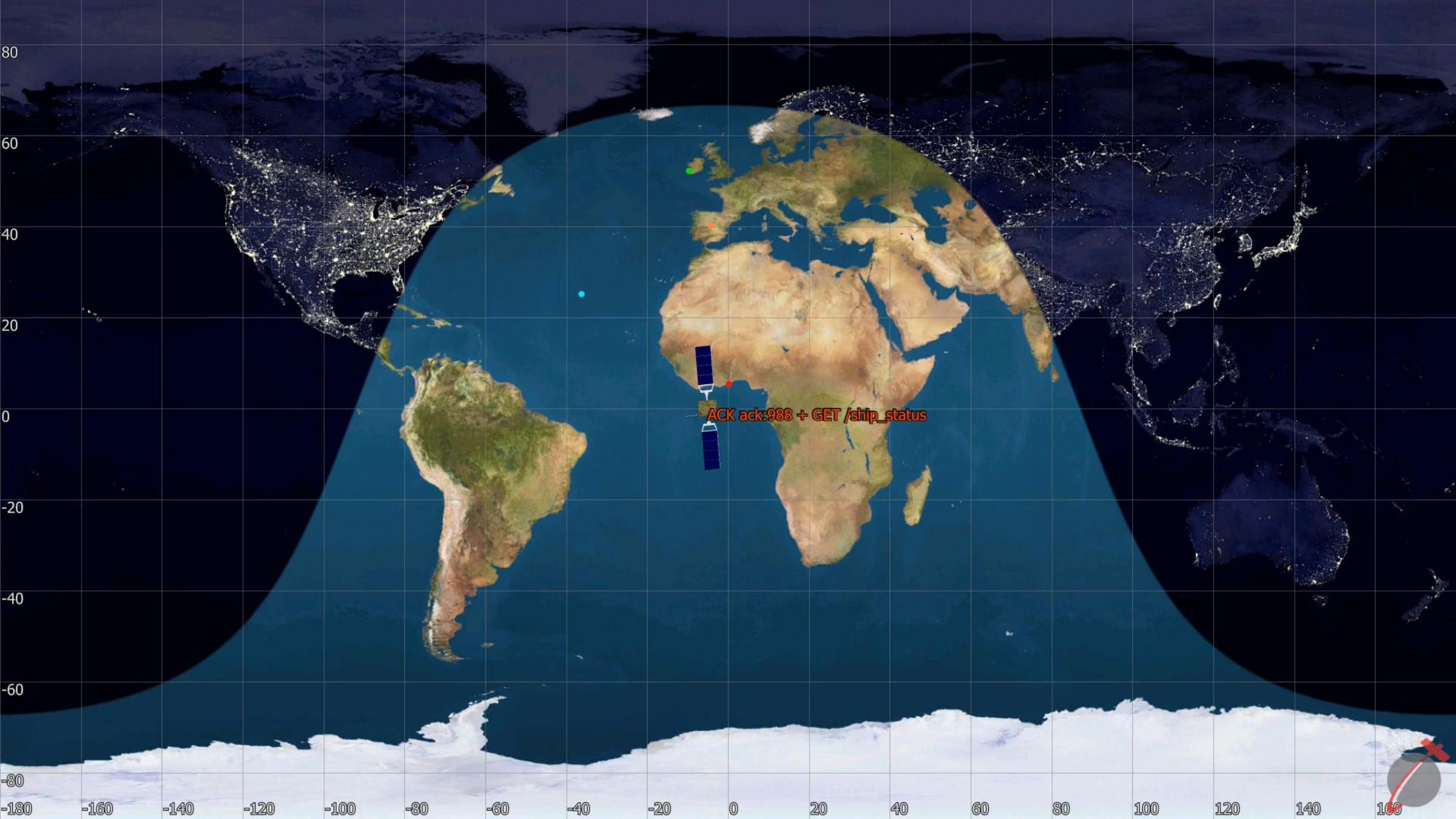
```
> Internet Protocol Version 4, Src: [REDACTED] n1 (62.4.1.1), Dst: [REDACTED]
> Transmission Control Protocol, Src Port: 8888, Dst Port: 55131, Seq: 123, Ack: 818497541, Len: 123
< Hypertext Transfer Protocol
  > HTTP/1.1 200 OK\n
    Server: MyServer\n
    Content-Type: text/html\n
  > Content-Length: 28\n
    Connection: close\n
    \n
    [HTTP response 1/2]
    [Next response in frame: 20]
    File Data: 28 bytes
< Line-based text data: text/html (1 lines)
  <b>Hijacked TCP Session</b>
```

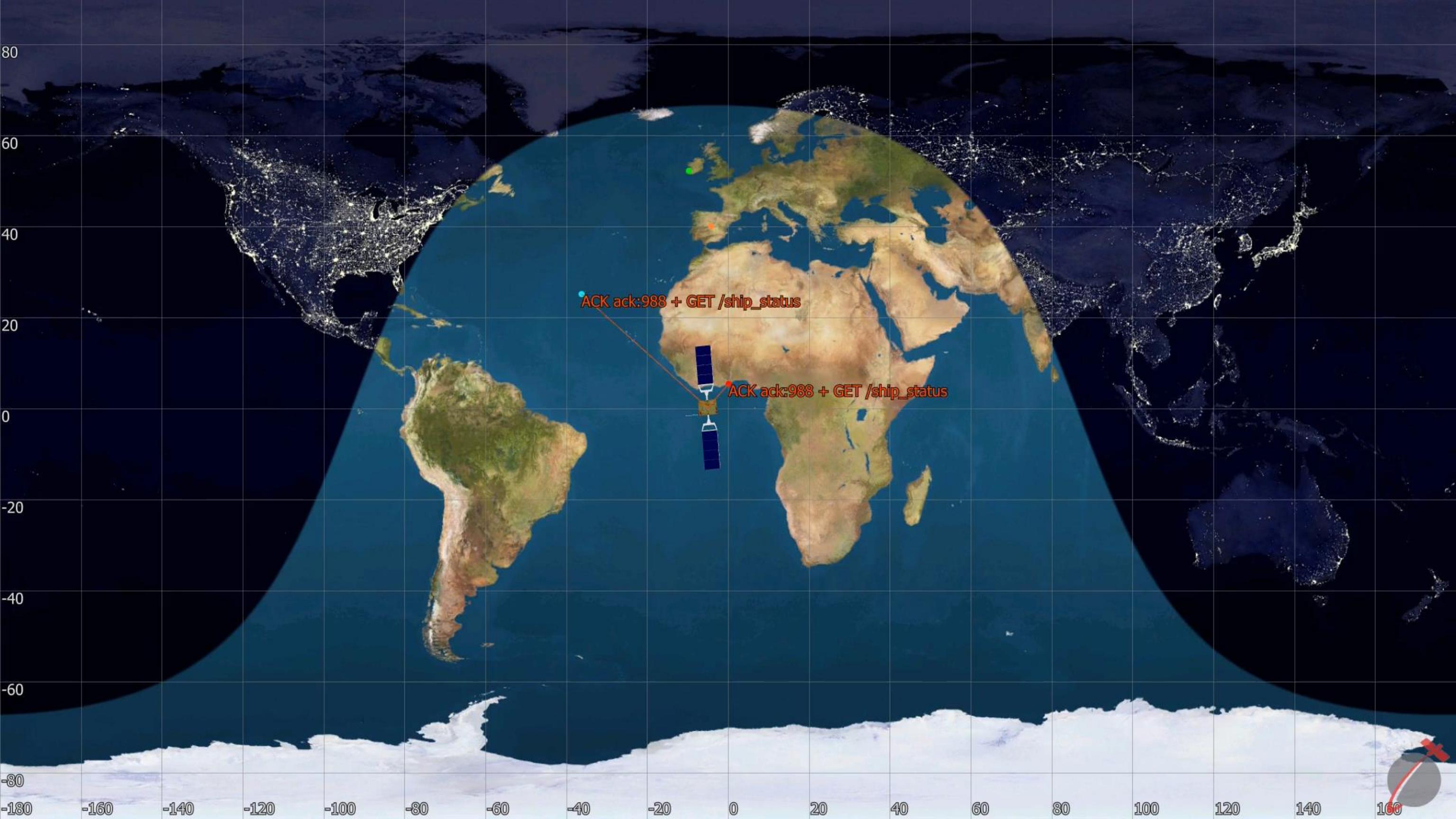












Ethics and Disclosure

Adhered to legal obligations in jurisdiction of data collection

- Data stored securely and only while needed
- Data was never shared with 3rd parties
- Encryption untouched
- Won't "name and shame"

Followed responsible disclosure process

- Contacted satellite operators in 2019
- Reached out to some of the largest impacted customers

Vast majority of companies were receptive

- Shared findings directly to CISOs of several large orgs
- Unclear if any changes have been made...
- Only one organization threatened legal action if we published!

Thanks FBI!

 TLP:WHITE

Private Industry Notification

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, CYBER DIVISION

14 February 2020

PIN Number
20200214-001

Please contact the FBI with any questions related to this Private Industry Notification at either your local **Cyber Task Force** or **FBI CyWatch**.

Local Field Offices:
www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field

E-mail:
cywatch@fbi.gov

Phone:
1-855-292-3937

The following information is being provided by the FBI, with no guarantees or warranties, for potential use at the sole discretion of recipients to protect against cyber threats. This data is provided to help cyber security professionals and system administrators guard against the persistent malicious actions of cyber criminals.

This PIN has been released **TLP:WHITE**: The information in this product may be distributed without restriction, subject to copyright controls.

VSAT Signals Vulnerable to Low-Cost Device Exploitation

Summary

The FBI has identified a potential increased risk to data transmitted by Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT). Previously, the cost of the satellite equipment needed to intercept the data from these terminals served as a barrier for threat actors. However, recently conducted research discovered man-in-the-middle attacks against maritime VSAT signals can be conducted with less than \$400 of widely available television equipment,^a presenting opportunities to a wider range of

Thanks FBI!



James Pavur
@JamesPavur

Excited to share that our paper on Maritime VSAT security will be presented S&P 2020 @IEEESSP. Check out the paper here:

doi.ieeecomputersociety.org/10.1109/SP4000...
#spacecybersecurity #sp20

3:28 PM · Mar 9, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)



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3:28 PM · Mar 9, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)



^a The materials used in the researchers experiment included a TBS-6903 DVB-S2X PCI card, Selfsat H30D satellite dish, and 3 meter coaxial cable.



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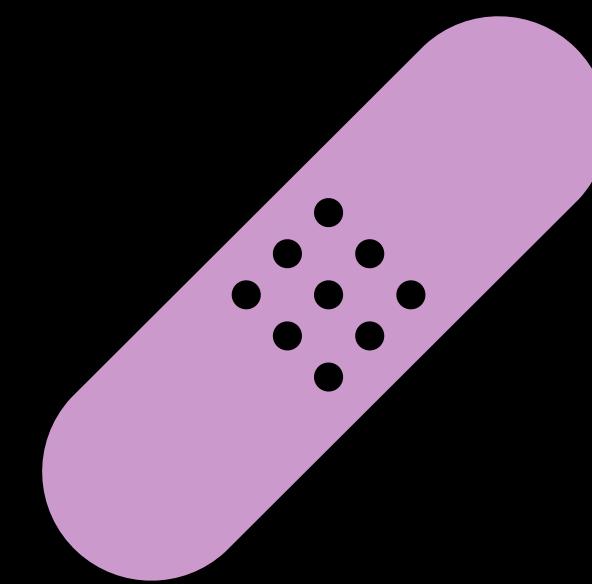
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Mitigations and Defenses

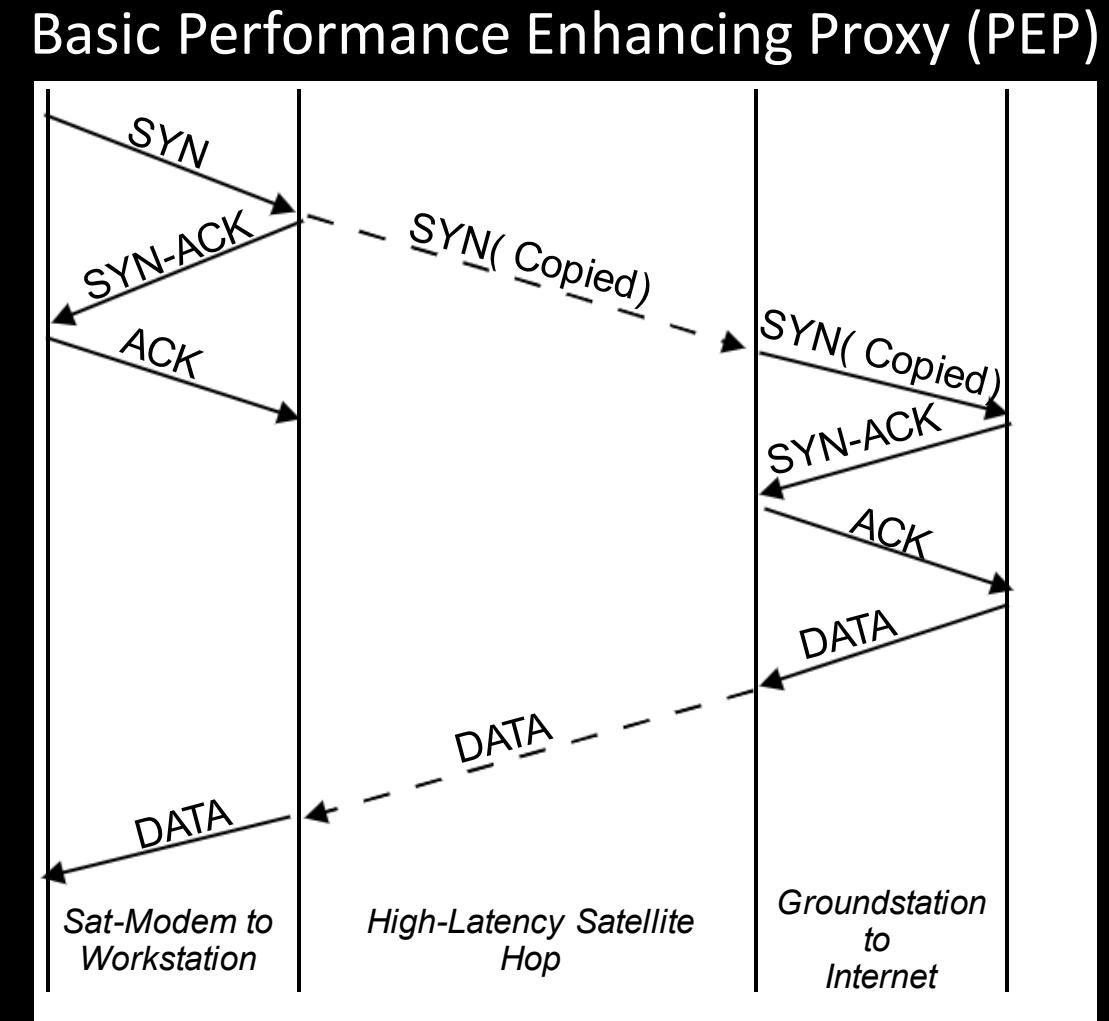
Why Does This Happen?

- Not just ignorance / incompetence
- Space is *far* and round-trip times (RTT) to GEO are long
- TCP especially troublesome because of the 3-way handshake



Your ISP: A Helpful MITM?

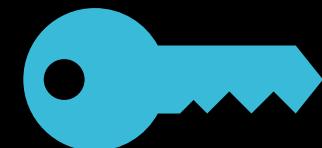
- Split TCP handshake locally
 - One handshake at the modem
 - One handshake at the ISP groundstation
- Problem: Can't split TCP connections if they're wrapped in a VPN
 - Applies to TCP-based VPNs too since underlying connection is wrapped



Ok, but what can I do *today*?



Accept VPN performance hit

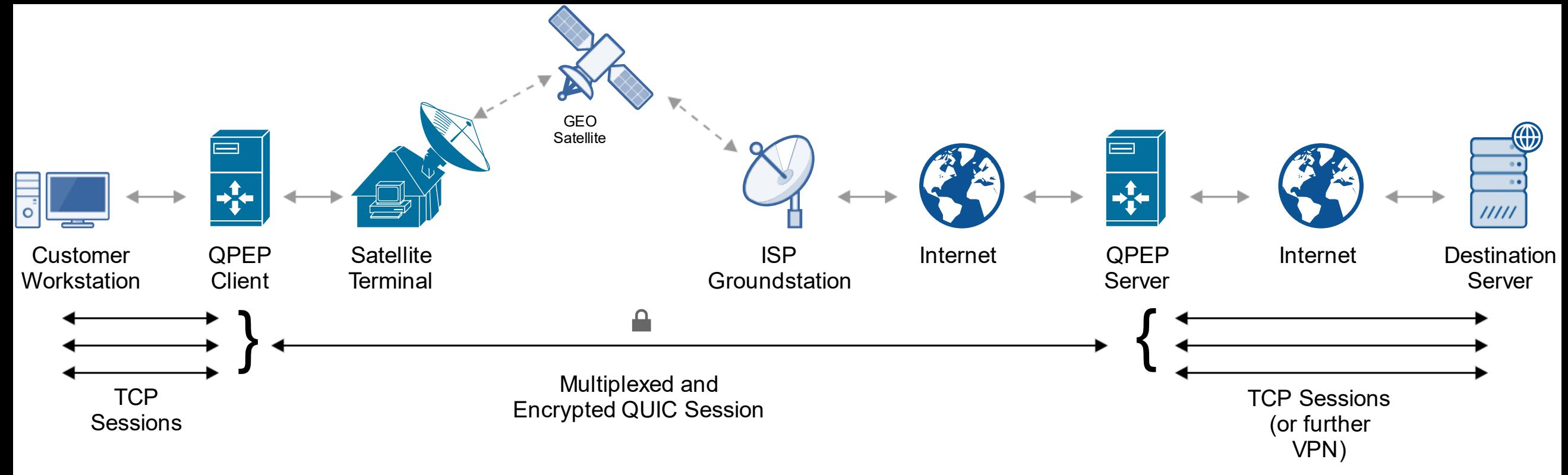


Use TLS / DNSSEC / etc.

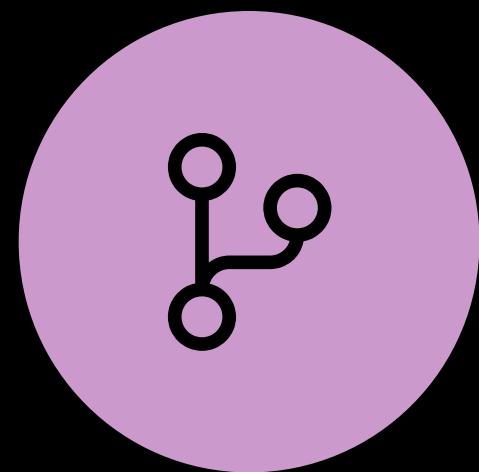


ISP: Alter sequence numbers in PEP

Longer Term: QPEP



QPEP Design Principles

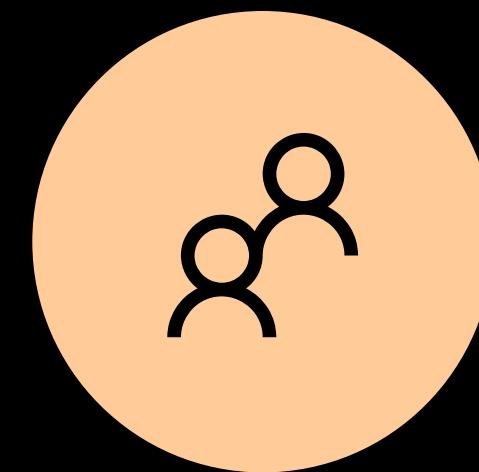


OPEN SOURCE

Contribute Here:
<https://github.com/ssloxford/qpep>

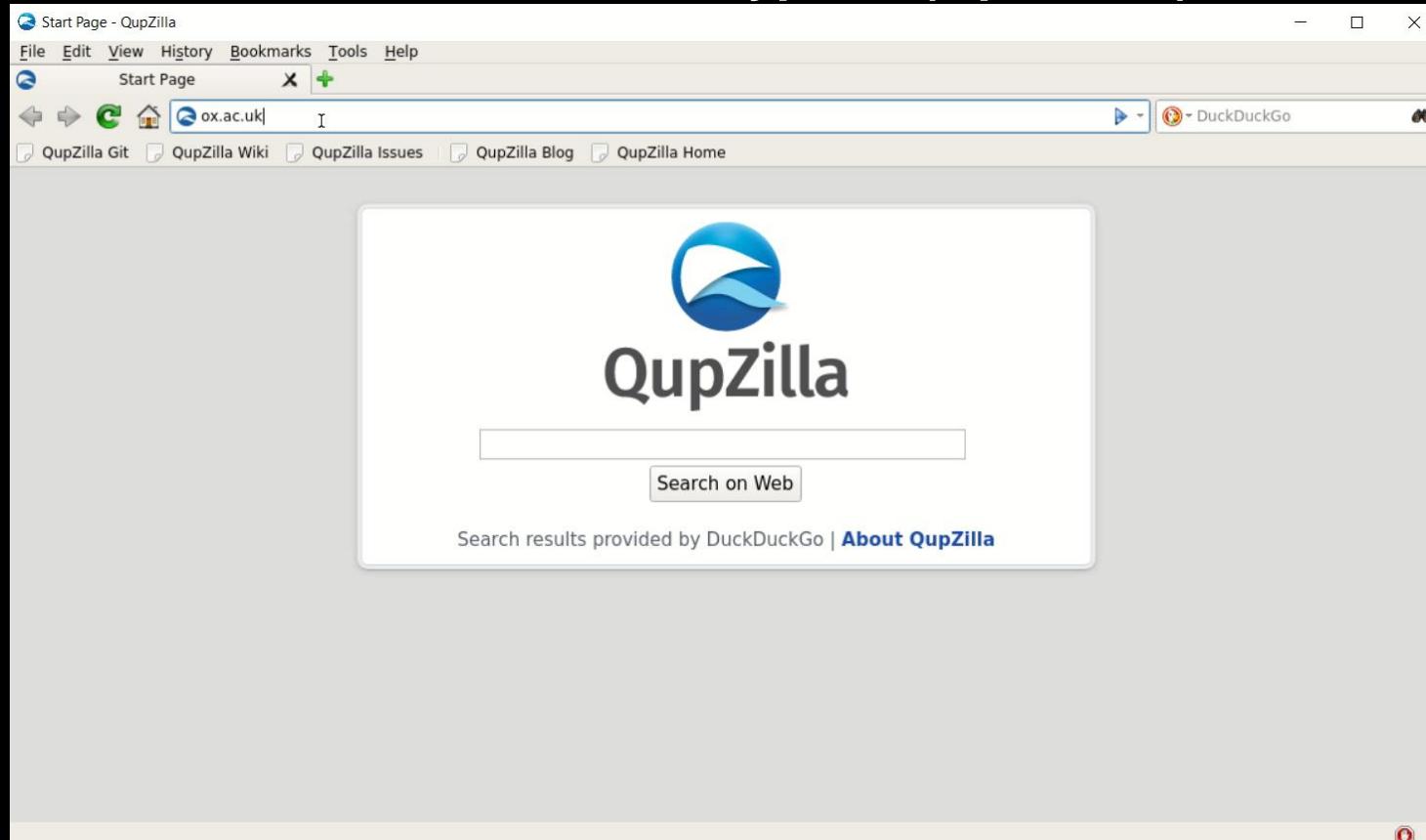


ACCESSIBLE & SIMPLE



TARGET INDIVIDUALS (NOT
ISPS)

Traditional VPN Encryption (OpenVPN)



 ~25 seconds

Encrypted PEP (QPEP)



 ~14 seconds

Key Takeaways



Satellite Broadband Traffic is Vulnerable
to Long-Range Eavesdropping Attacks



Satellite Customers Across Domains Leak
Sensitive Data Over Satellite Links



Performance and Privacy Don't Need to
Trade Off in SATCOMs Design

The “Next Hop” is unknown. Encrypt everything.