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Finmeccanica – Selex ES’s star tracker guides the New Horizons NASA mission probe to Pluto

The Finmeccanica - Selex ES's A-STR star tracker has led the NASA's New Horizons mission probe to Pluto, letting Selex ES reach the deepest space.

The A-STR for New Horizons, the only Italian contribution to the US mission to study Pluto, allows the probe to understand its orientation in space and to transmit its data to Earth.

The A-STR was integrated into the NASA probe in 2004 and the version used in this mission covers the operation of the instrument during the probe's rotation, both along its journey, and when the probe is pointed toward the planet. The base line A-STR hardware used for the New Horizons Mission is similar to the one installed on the probe of the ESA Rosetta mission.

The A-STR is produced in Selex ES Campi Bisenzio's plant (near Florence); since 2001 the company has delivered more than 100 star trackers all over the world, with a prospect of more than 200 units by 2016.