Lockheed Martin Ships Last DSCS Satellite To Cape Canaveral For July Launch

The last in a series of 14 Defense Satellite Communications System (DSCS) spacecraft built by Lockheed Martin for the U.S. Air Force has been shipped to Cape Canaveral Air Station, Fla., where it will be readied for a scheduled launch in July 2003.

The satellite, designated DSCS III B6 is a super high-frequency (SHF) communications satellite that features Service Life Enhancement Program (SLEP) upgrades designed to provide improved uninterrupted secure voice and high data rate communications to its Department of Defense users. Additional SLEP upgrades on B6 will provide increased downlink power and improved connectivity to its antennas.

This satellite will join the 13 other DSCS satellites on-orbit, including DSCS A3, which was launched successfully on March 10, 2003, and is currently performing nominally while the U.S. Air Force/Lockheed Martin team conducts on-orbit testing of all spacecraft systems before turning it over for operations.

"Lockheed Martin is very proud of this historic program milestone," said Leonard F. Kwiatkowski, vice president, Lockheed Martin Space & Strategic Missiles in Sunnyvale. "DSCS has provided the Department of Defense with its core communications capability for over 21 years and will continue to make a significant contribution to our national security well into the future."

Each DSCS III satellite has a design life of 10-years, although several of the DSCS satellites on-orbit today have far exceeded their design life expectancy and continue to perform with outstanding results. Last year, the first DSCS III satellite, A1, reached 20 years on orbit. DSCS III A1 was launched on Oct. 30, 1982 aboard a Titan 34D launch vehicle from Cape Canaveral.

From the time the first DSCS III satellite was launched to today, the DSCS III satellite, also known as the "workhorse of the U.S. Military's SHF communications satellite network," has provided secure and reliable communications to soldiers, sailors and airmen around the globe.

Space & Strategic Missiles is part of Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, headquartered in Denver, Colo., one of the major operating units of Lockheed Martin Corporation. Space Systems designs, develops, tests, manufactures and operates a variety of advanced technology systems for military, civil and commercial customers. Chief products include space launch and ground systems, remote sensing and communications satellites for commercial and government customers, advanced space observatories and interplanetary spacecraft, fleet ballistic missiles and missile defense systems.

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For more information about Lockheed Martin Space & Strategic Missiles-Sunnyvale, see our website at http://lmms.external.lmco.com/ .

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