U.S. Air Force Successfully Launches Newest Upgraded GPS IIR Satellite Built By Lockheed Martin

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CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla.

An upgraded Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite built by Lockheed Martin for the U.S. Air Force, was successfully launched today from Cape Canaveral. The satellite features significant performance upgrades, including an advanced antenna panel, which will increase power for GPS receivers. This was the 11th successful launch of the new-generation GPS IIR spacecraft.

The satellite, designated GPS IIR-12, will join 28 other operational GPS satellites now on orbit, and will improve global coverage and increase the overall performance of the GPS constellation. The company has delivered nine more of these satellites to the Navstar GPS Joint Program Office, Space and Missile Systems Center, to sustain the GPS constellation.

"Our long-standing partnership with the Air Force and the excellent performance of the GPS IIR satellite series is a source of considerable pride for Lockheed Martin," said Dave Podlesney, GPS IIR Program Director, Lockheed Martin Space Systems in Valley Forge, Pa. "We look forward to once again providing our customer with a high-quality, high-value satellite to ensure a robust GPS constellation for the warfighter as well as commercial and private users world-wide."

The Global Positioning System allows any properly equipped user to determine precise time and velocity and worldwide latitude, longitude and altitude to within a few meters. Although originally designed as a guidance and navigational tool for the military, GPS has proven beneficial in the commercial and civil markets for a number of activities, including transportation, surveying and rescue operations.

The GPS IIR satellites are compatible with the current system and provide improved navigation accuracy, achieved by using an ITT Industries payload system. Additionally, increased autonomy and longer spacecraft life are inherent in the Lockheed Martin satellite design.

To bring new capabilities to the GPS constellation, Lockheed Martin is under contract to modernize up to eight existing GPS IIR spacecraft already built and in storage. These spacecraft, designated GPS IIR-M, will incorporate two new military signals and a second civil signal, thus providing military and civilian users of the navigation system with improved capabilities much sooner than previously envisioned.

Lockheed Martin is performing GPS modernization at its Space Systems facilities in Valley Forge, Pa., and ITT Industries in Clifton, N.J. The first launch of a GPS IIR-M satellite is scheduled for February 2005.

Lockheed Martin is also leading a team to develop the U.S. Air Force's next-generation Global Positioning System, GPS III. The team, which includes Spectrum Astro, Raytheon, ITT, and General Dynamics, is currently under contract for GPS III concept definition and plans to compete for the future development.

GPS III will address the challenging military transformational and civil needs across the globe, including advanced anti-jam capabilities, improved system security and accuracy, and reliability. The new satellite system will enhance space-based navigation and performance and set a new world standard for positioning and timing services. The team selected to meet this challenge will provide system and sustaining engineering, satellite development and production, control segment upgrades, and continuous research and development for this evolutionary system.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2003 sales of $31.8 billion.

Media Contact: Steve Tatum, 408-742-7531;

e-mail, Stephen.o.tatum@lmco.com

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