Lockheed Martin Delivers First Modernized GPS Satellite To U.S. Air Force For May Launch

Lockheed Martin today announced that it has delivered the first modernized Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., where it will be readied for a May launch. The satellite, designated GPS IIR-M1, is the most technologically advanced GPS satellite ever developed and will provide significantly improved navigation performance for U.S. military and civilian users worldwide.

The satellite is the first in a series of eight GPS IIR satellites that Lockheed Martin is modernizing for its customer at the Navstar GPS Joint Program Office, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.

"Delivery of the first modernized IIR satellite is a significant milestone in the GPS mission," said Dave Podlesney, Lockheed Martin GPS program director. "We will now shift our focus to preparations for launch, and achieving mission success for our customer, which will pave the way for greatly increased navigation capabilities for our military personnel as well as civil users worldwide."

The current constellation of 30 GPS spacecraft includes 12 fully operational Block IIR satellites, which were developed to improve global coverage and increase the overall performance of the global positioning system. The modernized series, designated GPS IIR-M, will offer a variety of enhanced features for users of the navigation system, such as:

-- A modernized antenna panel that will provide increased signal power to GPS receivers on the ground.
-- Two new military signals that will allow for improved accuracy, enhanced encryption and anti-jamming performance for the military.
-- A second civil signal that will provide civil users with an open access signal on a different frequency.

The flexible design of the modernized spacecraft will enable GPS users to experience these benefits after launch and operational turnover of the satellite.

The Global Positioning System enables properly equipped users to determine precise time and velocity and worldwide latitude, longitude and altitude to within a few meters. Air Force Space Command's 2nd Space Operations Squadron (2SOPS), based at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., manages and operates the GPS constellation for both civil and military users.

The modernized navigation payload is being built by ITT Industries in Clifton, N.J. The satellite upgrades, along with final assembly, integration and test are being performed at Lockheed Martin facilities in Valley Forge, Pa.

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 2004 sales of $35.5 billion.

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