Lockheed Martin Successfully Completes Major Risk-Reduction Test Of SBIRS High Satellite

Lockheed Martin has successfully completed a crucial "jitter" test of the Space- Based Infrared System High (SBIRS High) geosynchronous orbit (GEO) satellite, an important step in meeting the critical performance requirements of the nation's next-generation missile warning system.

An important and highly complex feature of the SBIRS High GEO satellites is the Pointing and Control Assembly (PCA), which allows the satellite's two optical systems to be positioned to scan and stare at designated areas, enabling operators to modify areas of surveillance according to national priorities.

The heart of the SBIRS GEO satellite is the ability to use one optical system to rapidly and repeatedly scan an area of interest for infrared activity while not interfering with the second optical system's ability to simultaneously stare at another area. The successful test, which was conducted at Lockheed Martin's facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif., and utilized the GEO spacecraft structure and other flight hardware, demonstrated with high confidence that other sources of movement, such as reaction wheels, solar arrays and various deployable and steerable mechanisms will not impact the multiple missions of the infrared payload.

"Our robust jitter testing and analysis has shown with outstanding results that the critical line-of-sight performance and accurate pointing capabilities of SBIRS will work as designed," said Myles Crandall, Lockheed Martin's SBIRS High vice president. "Working closely with our Air Force customer, the team continues to work quickly and effectively to this deliver the unprecedented capabilities that this vital national program will provide for our warfighters."

When fully operational, SBIRS High will comprise two payloads in highly elliptical orbit (HEO), four satellites in geosynchronous orbit (GEO), as well as fixed and mobile ground-based assets to receive and process the infrared data. The team of Lockheed Martin Space Systems, Sunnyvale, Calif., the SBIRS High prime contractor, and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, Calif., the payload provider, has completed both HEO payloads and is on track to begin final integration and test of the first GEO satellite later this year in preparation for launch in fiscal year 2008. The SBIRS program is led by the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.

In addition to providing early warning of missile launches, SBIRS will support other missions simultaneously, including missile defense, technical intelligence and battlespace characterization.

SBIRS will support missile defense by providing the earliest possible warning of ballistic and theatre missile attacks and accurate information to effectively cue other ballistic missile defense system elements to support intercept and negation of the threat. Improved capabilities for technical intelligence will enable combat commanders the flexibility to gain valuable insight into an adversary's battlespace and provide both tactical and strategic missile warning around the globe.

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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