Lockheed Martin-Built GPS Satellites Mark 50 Years On Orbit

Solid Progress Continues with GPS Modernization Effort

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The fleet of Global Positioning System (GPS) Block IIR satellites designed and built by Lockheed Martin to significantly enhance the overall performance of the GPS constellation has now accumulated 50 years of successful in-orbit operations.

GPS provides such essential services as situational awareness and precision weapon guidance for the military. It is also an information resource supporting a wide range of civil, scientific and commercial functions -- from air traffic control to the Internet -- with precision location and timing information.

GPS IIR satellites have been delivering precise navigation service to the U.S. military as well as civil users world-wide since the first successful launch of a GPS IIR satellite on July 23, 1997.

There are currently 13 operational Block IIR satellites within the overall 28-spacecraft constellation, including the first modernized IIR satellite recently declared fully operational for GPS users around the globe following extensive on-orbit testing of the spacecraft's new military and civilian signals.

"GPS has not only proven to be a national asset for our military, but has also become an important service for civil and commercial users around the globe," said Dr. Don DeGryse, Lockheed Martin's vice president of Navigation Systems. "We take great pride in the sustained performance of the GPS IIR satellites on-orbit and look forward to delivering greater navigation capabilities now that we are launching the modernized series."

Designated GPS IIR-M, these spacecraft incorporate two new signals and enhanced encryption and anti-jamming capabilities for the military, as well as a second civil signal, thus providing military and civilian users of the navigation system with greatly improved capabilities.

GPS modernization is being performed at Lockheed Martin's facilities in Valley Forge, Pa., and ITT Industries in Clifton, N.J. The team is now gearing up for the launch of the second IIR-M satellite scheduled for liftoff in 2006 from Cape Canaveral. The third spacecraft has been delivered to storage for launch later this year, and assembly, and integration and test of the fourth satellite is underway following ITT's recent delivery of the modernized payload.

Lockheed Martin is under contract to deliver eight IIR-M satellites for its customer, the Navstar GPS Joint Program Office, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif. Air Force Space Command's 2nd Space Operations Squadron (2 SOPS) at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., manages and operates the GPS constellation for both civil and military users.

Lockheed Martin is also leading a team competing to build the next-generation Global Positioning System, known as GPS Block III. The new program will address the challenging military transformational and civil needs across the globe, including advanced anti-jam capabilities, improved system security and accuracy, and reliability. GPS Block III will enhance space-based navigation and performance and set a new world standard for positioning and timing services.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

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