Lockheed Martin Delivers Critical Flight Software For "First-Of-Its-Kind" Missile Warning Satellite

Lockheed Martin announced today that it has delivered the Pointing and Control Assembly software necessary to support software qualification and thermal vacuum testing of the first Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) geosynchronous orbit (GEO) satellite.

SBIRS is designed to provide the nation with greatly enhanced missile warning capabilities and support other vital mission areas simultaneously including missile defense, technical intelligence and battlespace characterization.

The software will provide for the necessary functionality of the payload's Pointing and Control Assembly (PCA), which operates the spacecraft's highly-sensitive staring and scanning sensors. The scanning sensor will provide for short revisit times over its full field of view, while the staring sensor will be used for step-stare or dedicated stare operations over smaller areas.

"Working closely with our Air Force customer, the team has achieved another major milestone in the development of this first-of-its-kind satellite," said Mark Crowley, Lockheed Martin's SBIRS vice president. "The improved infrared event detection and reporting capabilities provided by SBIRS will play an integral role in our nation's information and intelligence architecture and we look forward to achieving mission success on this vitally important program."

The software was delivered to Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, Calif., where it will be integrated with the Signal Processing Assembly (SPA), a key payload component that extracts the infrared "signal" from the background noise and clutter. The completed payload is scheduled to be delivered to Lockheed Martin's facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif., in mid-2007 for final spacecraft assembly, integration and test in preparation for launch in late 2008.

In other SBIRS news, the team is in the final stages of an important spacecraft test phase at Lockheed Martin's facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif. Known as Spacecraft Functional Testing (SCFT), this major milestone will verify the functional requirements of the GEO spacecraft and further assure that the structure is assembled to specification.

Following successful completion of SCFT, the team will prepare the spacecraft for engineering thermal vacuum testing which will verify the spacecraft performance at temperature extremes greater than those expected during on-orbit operations.

The U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center manages the SBIRS High program, with Air Force Space Command responsible for the operation of the SBIRS system. Lockheed Martin is currently under contract to provide two payloads in highly elliptical orbit (HEO) and two GEO satellites, as well as fixed and mobile ground-based assets to receive and process the infrared data. The team has delivered both HEO payloads and is on track to launch the first GEO satellite in late 2008.

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

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