Lockheed Martin's Atlas Program Selected For Aviation Week 2006 Program Excellence Award

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Lockheed Martin's Atlas launch vehicle program has received the 2006 Aviation Week & Space Technology 2006 Program Excellence Award. The award was announced at the publication's Aerospace and Defense Conference in Phoenix, Ariz., last evening.

"I am proud to accept this award on behalf of the men and women of the Atlas team, including our suppliers and Air Force, National Reconnaissance Office, and NASA partners, who have worked together to make Atlas one of the most reliable and capable launch vehicles of all time," said Jim Sponnick, Lockheed Martin Atlas program vice president. Joining Sponnick in accepting the award was Air Force Brigadier General Neil McCasland, Space and Missiles Systems Center vice commander.

Said General McCasland, "The Atlas team displays a relentless quest for excellence that has resulted in an outstanding record of mission success. Our space capability is a national asset that Atlas has supported for almost five decades and will continue to enable well into the future."

The Program Excellence Award is judged by a panel of industry experts according to a comprehensive set of criteria that includes quality program management. Programs are evaluated on how they create value for the parent corporation and customers, establish organization and leadership processes, address complexity and use metrics to measure performance.

"The Atlas program has an extraordinary heritage of success in the service of our country," said Tony Velocci, Editor-in-Chief, Aviation Week & Space Technology. "Its record of success is a testament to Lockheed Martin's commitment to excellence and meeting the needs of its customers."

In June 2007, the Atlas program will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its first Atlas launch. In its five-decade history, the Atlas has evolved through numerous vehicle configurations to the current Atlas V, which was developed as part of the Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) program. Since 1990, the program has developed eight new configurations, each of which was successful on its inaugural flight. Since 1993, Atlas has launched 79 national security, space exploration, and commercial missions with 100% mission success. The modular Atlas V system provides the flexibility to handle a wide range of mission requirements from nanosats and secondary payloads to the most demanding national security payloads and interplanetary science missions.

"Lockheed Martin has a rich heritage of space launch history demonstrated in over 1,000 Atlas and Titan launches. This 2006 Program Excellence Award recognizes the contributions of the Atlas team and its dedication to mission success and to continuous improvement of the Atlas system," said Michael C. Gass, Lockheed Martin Space Transportation Systems vice president and general manager, and designated CEO and president of the proposed United Launch Alliance.

The Atlas program has been recognized with other awards including several Aviation Week & Space Technology Laurels and with a NOVA, the highest Lockheed Martin corporate award, for development and launch of the first Atlas V.

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, a major operating unit of Lockheed Martin Corporation, designs, develops, tests, manufactures and operates a variety of advanced-technology systems for national security, civil and commercial customers. Chief products include human space flight systems; a full range of remote sensing, navigation, meteorological and communications satellites and instruments; space observatories and interplanetary spacecraft; launch vehicles, fleet ballistic missiles; and missile defense systems.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 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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