4th Modernized GPS Satellite Built By Lockheed Martin Launched Successfully

A U.S. Air Force modernized Global Positioning System Block IIR (GPS IIR-M) satellite, designed and built by Lockheed Martin , was launched successfully today from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station aboard a United Launch Alliance (ULA) Delta II launch vehicle.

Designated GPS IIR-17M, the satellite is the fourth in a series of eight Block IIR-M spacecraft that Lockheed Martin Navigation Systems has modernized for its customer, the Global Positioning Systems Wing, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif. The Block IIR-M series includes new features that enhance operations and navigation signal performance for military and civilian GPS users around the globe.

"Lockheed Martin is extremely proud of its partnership with the Air Force to sustain and improve the GPS constellation," said Don DeGryse, Lockheed Martin's vice president of Navigation Systems. "We look forward to executing a timely and efficient on-orbit checkout of this advanced spacecraft and providing GPS users worldwide with increased navigation capabilities."

Each IIR-M satellite includes a modernized antenna panel that provides increased signal power to receivers on the ground, two new military signals for improved accuracy, enhanced encryption and anti-jamming capabilities for the military, and a second civil signal that will provide users with an open access signal on a different frequency. The satellite launched today joins three IIR-M satellites and 12 other operational Block IIR satellites within the current 28-spacecraft constellation.

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 (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 which includes ITT and General Dynamics in the competition to build the U.S. Air Force's next-generation Global Positioning System, GPS Block III. The next-generation program will improve position, navigation, and timing services for the warfighter and civil users worldwide and provide advanced anti-jam capabilities yielding improved system security, accuracy and reliability.

A multi-billion dollar development contract is scheduled to be awarded by the Global Positioning Systems Wing, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif. in early 2008.

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 2006 sales of $39.6 billion.

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