Lockheed Martin Delivers Key Satellite Hardware For New Military Communications System

Lockheed Martin has achieved another major milestone in the development of the Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) military communications system with the successful delivery of the core propulsion module for the second satellite in the program constellation. The AEHF system will provide global, highly secure, protected, survivable communications for all warfighters serving under the U.S. Department of Defense.

Developed and tested at Lockheed Martin's Mississippi Space & Technology Center, an advanced propulsion, thermal, and metrology facility located at the John C. Stennis Space Center, the core propulsion module contains the integrated propulsion system as well as panels and other components that serve as the structural foundation of the satellite.

The AEHF propulsion system, which includes an electric propulsion system provided by Aerojet of Sacramento, Calif., is essential for maneuvering the satellite during transfer orbit to its final location as well as conducting on-orbit repositioning maneuvers throughout its mission life. The integrated system was delivered ahead of schedule to the company's facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif.

The successful delivery allows the team of Lockheed Martin Space Systems, Sunnyvale, Calif., the AEHF prime contractor, and Northrop Grumman Space Technology, Redondo Beach, Calif., the payload supplier, to prepare for the spacecraft and payload mate planned for mid-2008, followed by environmental and acceptance testing of the completed satellite in preparation for launch in 2009.

"The smooth development and early delivery of this sophisticated hardware is the result of our relentless focus on achieving operational excellence and mission success for our customer," Jeff Smith, Lockheed Martin's AEHF vice president and program manager. "We look forward to our continued positive momentum as we begin the final assembly, integration and test of this second AEHF satellite next year."

Based on Lockheed Martin's flight-proven A2100 spacecraft series, each AEHF satellite will provide greater total capacity than the entire Milstar constellation and offer channel data rates higher than the current Milstar communications satellites. The higher data rates permit transmission of secure, tactical military communications such as real-time video, battlefield maps and targeting data.

Lockheed Martin is currently under contract to provide three Advanced EHF satellites and the command control system to its customer, the Military Satellite Communications Systems Wing, located at the Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.

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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