Lockheed Martin Team Successfully Completes Major Flight Software Design Review For Space-Based Missile Warning System

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Lockheed Martin today announced the successful completion of a comprehensive review of improved flight software designed to provide highly reliable command and control of the Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) geosynchronous orbit (GEO) spacecraft.

SBIRS is designed to provide early warning of missile launches, and simultaneously support other missions including missile defense, technical intelligence and battlespace characterization.

Nearly 80 representatives from the U.S. Air Force, the Aerospace Corporation and the Department of Defense (DoD) participated in a detailed Integrated Design Review (IDR) at Lockheed Martin's facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif.

Under contract to the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif., Lockheed Martin Space Systems, the SBIRS prime contractor, enhanced SBIRS flight software to enable more robust command and data handling, fault management and safe-hold capabilities on the GEO satellite system. An integral component of the spacecraft's command and data handling subsystem, the fault management system responds when an anomaly is detected in normal operations, putting the satellite into a safe state while operators on the ground analyze the situation and take corrective action.

"The successful review is direct testimony to the joint team's hard work and commitment to achieving operational excellence on this critical national program," said Jeff Smith, Lockheed Martin's SBIRS vice president and GEO-1 program manager. "We look forward to our continued progress and bringing powerful new global surveillance capabilities to our warfighters with the launch of this first-of-its-kind spacecraft."

Successful completion of the IDR allows the team to proceed with final development and delivery of flight software blocks necessary to support pre-launch spacecraft testing, including thermal vacuum testing which will validate spacecraft performance at temperature extremes greater than those expected during on-orbit operations. After the extensive environmental and final integrated test phase, the spacecraft will be shipped to the Air Force in late 2009 in preparation for launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Base, Fla.

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, Sunnyvale, Calif., and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, Calif., the payload integrator, are developing SBIRS for the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center. Air Force Space Command operates the SBIRS system.

Lockheed Martin is currently under contract to provide two HEO payloads and two GEO satellites, as well as ground-based assets to receive and process the infrared data. The Lockheed Martin team has delivered both HEO payloads and the first GEO satellite launch is scheduled for late 2009. The first HEO payload has completed initial on-orbit deployment and checkout and demonstrated that its performance meets or exceeds specifications. The program is in the early stages of adding additional GEO spacecraft and HEO payloads to the planned constellation.

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 2007 sales of $41.9 billion.

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