

Thales Alenia Space Awards Lockheed Martin Payload Application Software Development Contract For Iridium NEXT Satellites

GAITHERSBURG, Md., April 18, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- [Thales Alenia Space](#) has awarded a contract to Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) to develop, test and support integration of payload application software for the Iridium NEXT satellites.

Thales Alenia Space is the prime contractor for Iridium NEXT, the next-generation satellite constellation being designed, built and launched for [Iridium Communications Inc.](#), (Nasdaq: IRDM), of McLean, Va. Iridium NEXT is expected to begin launching in 2015, and will replace the company's current satellite constellation.

"Lockheed Martin, selected as the result of a competitive process, offered the lowest-risk and most comprehensive solution for the payload application software needed to meet the challenging requirements of Iridium NEXT," said Reynald Seznec, President and CEO of Thales Alenia Space. "We look forward to working with Lockheed Martin as part of delivering this program successfully."

"Lockheed Martin looks forward to partnering with Thales Alenia Space on this important program," said Robert Kramer, Lockheed Martin Information Systems and Global Solutions- Defence Vice President of Operational Systems & Services. "We bring extensive full life-cycle experience in spacecraft, ground systems and software development to provide Thales Alenia an outstanding overall software solution. Our team has a thorough understanding of the Iridium NEXT system and the payload application software that will provide the important foundation for both backward compatible legacy services as well as promising new services in the near term and over the life of the new constellation."

Iridium operates the world's farthest reaching communications network and largest commercial satellite constellation, providing the only truly global voice and data satellite communications service through a constellation of 66 low Earth-orbiting (LEO) satellites. Iridium NEXT will significantly enhance the capacity and services of the network.

"Thales Alenia continues to construct the most impressive technology team possible as it builds out Iridium NEXT," said Matt Desch, CEO, Iridium. "Lockheed Martin is a long-time Iridium partner, and we are confident that its payload application software will be a key enabler as we extend our unique connectivity applications, services and devices to a broader user base on Earth and in space through Iridium NEXT."

About Lockheed Martin

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 126,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's 2010 sales from continuing operations were \$45.8 billion.

About Thales Alenia Space

Firmly established as one of the two leading European space industry giants and one the traditional six that dominate the communication satellite market worldwide, Thales Alenia Space achieved revenues exceeding Euro 2 billions (\$ 2.75 billion) in 2010. Its 7,200 highly-qualified employees are disseminated on nine industrial sites throughout France, Italy, Belgium and Spain. These include a facility in Rome that was tailor-made for the integration of large series of spacecraft for constellations. In the recent years, Thales Alenia Space's unique competence in this domain was recognized through the award of contracts for 145 satellites designed for LEO and MEO constellations.

About Iridium

Iridium Communications Inc. (www.iridium.com) is the only mobile satellite service (MSS) company offering coverage over the entire globe. The Iridium constellation of LEO cross-linked satellites provides critical voice and data services for areas not served by terrestrial communication networks. Iridium serves commercial markets through a worldwide network of distributors, and provides services to the U.S. Department of Defense and other U.S. and international government agencies. The Company's customers represent a broad spectrum of industry, including maritime, aeronautical, government/defense, public safety, utilities, oil/gas, mining, forestry, heavy

equipment and transportation. Iridium has launched a major development program for its next-generation satellite constellation, Iridium NEXT. The Company is headquartered in McLean, Va., U.S.A. and trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbols IRDM (common stock), IRDMW (\$7.00 warrants), IRDMZ (\$11.50 warrants) and IRDMU (units).

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