Lockheed Martin Honors Pioneers Of Recently Declassified National Reconnaissance Satellites

PR Newswire
SUNNYVALE, Calif.

SUNNYVALE, Calif., Jan. 25, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Pioneers of the highly successful Gambit and Hexagon legacy reconnaissance systems recently unveiled by the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) were honored during a Jan. 24 ceremony at Lockheed Martin's (NYSE: LMT) facilities inSunnyvale, Calif.

Gambit and Hexagon followed Corona, the nation's first photo reconnaissance satellite system to return an image from space successfully. All three programs were built by industry teams under contract to the NRO with Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company as the satellite system integrator. These programs provided vital national security information from 1960 until 1986.

Approximately 400 former employees involved in some aspect of Hexagon and Gambit and their guests attended the ceremony which featured displays and videos highlighting spacecraft production, launch and technical capabilities including actual Earth imagery. Speakers included Bruce Carlson, director of the NRO, andJoanne Maguire, executive vice president of Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company.

In his remarks, Carlson expressed his gratitude to the entire Lockheed Martin team for their contributions to national security: "Without this vital work, we would not have had the search, surveillance, and mapping capabilities that provided the high resolution imagery that gave our nation's decision makers the ability to deal with our adversaries from a position of strength."

"The successes achieved by the Hexagon and Gambit teams built upon the Corona legacy to deliver unprecedented mission capabilities and longevity," said Maguire. "We are enormously proud of our role in providing these vitally important remote sensing assets to the nation."

The first Gambit system, launched in 1963, was equipped with a 77-inch focal length camera system . The second system, Gambit 3 was equipped with the camera system that included a 175-inch focal length camera. The system was first launched in 1966 and provided the U.S. with exquisite surveillance capabilities from space for nearly two decades.

Hexagon was first launched in 1971 to improve upon Corona's capability to image broad denied areas for threats to the United States. Twelve of the 19 systems flown also carried a mapping camera to aid in U.S. military war planning.

The United States depended on these search and surveillance satellites to understand the capabilities, intentions, and advancements of those who opposed the U.S during the Cold War. Together they became America's essential eyes in space.

In addition, Gambit and Hexagon were launched aboard rockets built by Lockheed Martin heritage companies. Gambit 1 was launched on an Atlas rocket with the orbiting Agena D upper stage and Gambit 3 was launched using a Titan III B booster. Hexagon was launched aboard the larger Titan III D rocket.

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company is a world leader in the most advanced space-based systems for government and global commercial customers. Its expertise in stabilized, remote sensing spacecraft for high-resolution remote sensing missions began with Corona, a ground-breaking system that achieved its first successful launch in 1960.

The company draws on its wealth of expertise in building and integrating remote sensing satellites to provide commercial customers with advanced systems such as the GeoEye's IKONOS satellite and its next-generation Earth imaging program, known as GeoEye-2.

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.

Media Contact: Steve Tatum, 408-742-7531; e-mail, stephen.o.tatum@lmco.com

SOURCE Lockheed Martin

---

https://news.lockheedmartin.com/2012-01-25-Lockheed-Martin-Honors-Pioneers-of-Recently-Declassified-National-Reconnaissance-Satellites