Lockheed Martin Powers On The First GPS III Satellite

DENVER, Feb. 28, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The Lockheed Martin [NYSE: LMT] team developing the U.S. Air Force's next generation Global Positioning System III satellites has turned on power to the system module of the program's first spacecraft, designated GPS III Space Vehicle One (SV-1). The milestone is a key indication the team is on track to deliver the first satellite for launch availability in 2014.

The GPS III program will affordably replace aging GPS satellites, while improving capability to meet the evolving demands of military, commercial and civilian users. GPS III satellites will deliver better accuracy and improved anti-jamming power while enhancing the spacecraft's design life and adding a new civil signal designed to be interoperable with international global navigation satellite systems.

"This milestone is the latest in a series of critical events signifying that our joint government and industry GPS III team is performing efficiently and meeting its commitments," said Lt Col Todd Caldwell, the U.S. Air Force's GPS III program manager.

Successfully powering on GPS III SV-1 demonstrates mechanical integration, validates the satellite's interfaces and leads the way for electrical and integrated hardware-software testing. The satellite will complete its Assembly, Integration and Test (AI&T) in Lockheed Martin's new GPS Processing Facility (GPF) designed for efficient and affordable satellite production. Like in aircraft or automobile manufacturing, each GPS III satellite will move through sequential work stations for various AI&T operations, culminating with shipment to the launch site.

"Turning power on to the first GPS III satellite is a major milestone for the team," said Keoki Jackson, vice president of Lockheed Martin's Navigation Systems mission area. "The successful integration of the first satellite's system module follows on the heels of our pathfinder GPS III Non-Flight Satellite Testbed (GNST), and demonstrates the great value of the investments made by the Air Force to implement low-risk spacecraft acquisition. In this challenging budget environment, we are focused on delivering the critical GPS III capabilities to users affordably and on schedule."

Lockheed Martin is currently under contract for production of the first four GPS III satellites, and advanced procurement funding of long-lead components for the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth satellites. The Air Force plans to purchase up to 32 GPS III satellites.

The GPS III team is led by the Global Positioning Systems Directorate at the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center. Lockheed Martin is the GPS III prime contractor with teammates ITT Exelis, General Dynamics, Infinity Systems Engineering, Honeywell, ATK and other subcontractors. Air Force Space Command's 2nd Space Operations Squadron (2SOPS), based at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., manages and operates the GPS constellation for both civil and military users.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs about 120,000 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 net sales for 2012 were $47.2 billion.

Note to Editors:
GPS III video and high-resolution images are available for download at www.lockheedmartin.com/gps

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