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The 250th Delta expendable launch vehicle successfully carried five satellites into orbit today at 5:34:26 p.m. PST, from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

"Delta 250 is more than a milestone for us," said Gale Schluter, vice president of Boeing Expendable Launch Systems. "The teamwork and cooperation between the Boeing Delta team, our customers and our suppliers has made 250 launches possible. It is that same teamwork and dedication to bringing a quality product to the market, that will carry Delta rockets into the next millennium."

Boeing Delta II rockets have launched five of the seven IRIDIUM missions over the past six months. To date Deltas have placed 25 of the system's satellites into orbit. IRIDIUM, a planned 66-satellite communications constellation, is scheduled to start providing global telecommunications service in late 1998.

"Since May we have launched nine Delta II rockets," said Jay Witzling, division director of Delta II and Titan fairing programs. "Our aggressive launch schedule has been in response to the needs of our customers. It is also preparing us to meet our goal next year of launching approximately 17 Deltas including our first Delta III."

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Media wishing to cover the launch should contact the VAFB Public Affairs office at (805) 734-8232 ext. 6-3595.

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