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A Boeing Delta II successfully launched from Cape Canaveral Air Station, Fla., delivered the first four satellites of the Globalstar network at 09:34 EST.

The Globalstar satellites are built by Space Systems/Loral, a division of Loral Space & Communications. When completed, the satellite constellation will consist of 56 satellites orbiting at 756 nautical miles (1400 km) above the Earth.

"The Delta II has delivered many firsts and the inaugural launch for Globalstar is another important milestone in the vehicle's history," said Darryl Van Dorn, Boeing director of NASA and Commercial Delta Programs. " The success of the first launch can be attributed to the outstanding team effort with Globalstar and Space Systems/Loral."

To fulfill Globalstar's launch needs, the Delta II team created a vehicle configuration using four solid rocket motors and a unique satellite dispenser capable of delivering four satellites.

The second launch for Globalstar, also by a Delta II, is scheduled for April of 1998.

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