Sea Launch Receives Additional Hughes Launch Service Orders

Sea Launch today announced four confirmed orders from Hughes Space and Communications (HSC) for delivery-on-orbit satellite launch service contracts. The new orders fall within the 2001 to 2003 timeframe and bring the Sea Launch manifest to 19 confirmed launches.

"We've maintained all along that the Sea Launch concept provides an attractive and cost-effective option for companies seeking delivery of their communications payloads to geosynchronous transfer orbit," said Allen B. Ashby, Sea Launch president. "These orders from Hughes reflect the satellite industry interest in launch service providers that have a heavy lift capability and can meet the cost, performance and launch scheduling objectives of today's competitive marketplace."

"These additional orders for launches on the Sea Launch system reaffirm Hughes" confidence in this launch concept. We believe that offering our satellite customers a reliable, cost-effective path into space will contribute significantly to the achievement of their business goals, and ultimately increase business opportunities for Hughes," Tig H. Krekel, HSC president and CEO said.

The new orders come on the heels of Sea Launch's successful demonstration launch of an instrumented payload on March 27; a launch that validated the Sea Launch concept by placing a mass simulated spacecraft in a precise geosynchronous transfer orbit with a high degree of injection accuracy. A review of spacecraft data confirmed that loads and environments met all of the established success criteria and the orbit injection accuracy requirements.

Preparations are currently underway at the Sea Launch HomePort in Long Beach Calif., for the company's next launch in the August/September timeframe of this year. Sea Launch, in conjunction with Hughes Space and Communications and DIRECTV, recently announced that the payload for that launch would be the new DIRECTV 1-R satellite.

"We were extremely pleased with the performance of our team during the successful launch of DemoSat and are proceeding in a methodic manner to ensure the same level of mission success for DIRECTV," Ashby added.

The Sea Launch concept, which combines heritage hardware with a unique equatorial launch site, affords several value-added operational benefits to launch customers including increased performance, high launch availability, reduced launch infrastructure costs and the most direct route to geostationary transfer orbit. From the equator, the company's robust Zenit-3SL rocket can either carry additional mass or place a payload into a higher perigee, helping to achieve a longer satellite service capability.

Building on proven performance and flight-tested hardware, Sea Launch combines the world's best aerospace and marine technologies to provide satellite and end-user customers with superior value, performance and fully integrated commercial launch service capabilities. The Sea Launch global partnership includes Boeing Commercial Space Company, Kent, Wash., (provides spacecraft integration and the payload fairings); Kvaerner Maritime a.s., of Oslo, Norway (the vessel builder); RSC Energia of Moscow, Russia (provides the Block-DM upper stage and its integration with the launch vehicle); and KB Yuzhnoye/PO Yuzhmash of Ukraine (provides the first two stages of the launch vehicle)

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