Boeing Delta II Launches Global Positioning Satellite for U.S. Air Force

The U.S. Air Force launched a Global Positioning System (GPS-II-R) satellite today, marking the 30th GPS satellite put into orbit by a Boeing Delta II over the past decade.

The launch took place at 8:51 a.m. EDT from Pad A of Space Launch Complex 17. Boeing has an additional 17 launches manifested aboard the Delta II for the satellite-based navigation system.

Boeing [NYSE: BA] is working on design, development and production of the third-generation of GPS satellites, the Block II-F, for the U.S. Air Force. Beginning in 2002, a number of these satellites will be launched on the Boeing Delta IV under the U.S. Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) program. Last year, Boeing was awarded 19 of 28 EELV launches in a contract valued at $1.38 billion.

Boeing also is expanding its involvement to include other government space and communication programs. Earlier this month, the National Reconnaissance Office awarded a Future Imagery Architecture contract to a team led by Boeing.

"Today's launch was another great example of the partnership we have developed with the Air Force," said Will Hampton, Boeing director of U.S. Air Force Delta II programs. "We look forward to continuing our support of the nation's defense and communications systems."

The Delta II rocket is manufactured in Huntington Beach, Calif., with final assembly in Pueblo, Colo. The rocket is powered by the RS-27A engine built by Boeing in Canoga Park, Calif. Launch coordination and operations for this mission were provided by the Delta launch team at Cape Canaveral Air Station.

Alliant Techsystems, Magna, Utah, builds the graphite epoxy motors for boost assist. Aerojet, Sacramento, Calif., manufactures the second-stage engine, Cordant Technologies, Elkton, Maryland, builds the third-stage motor, and AlliedSignal, Teterboro, N.J., builds the guidance and flight control system.

Recognized as the world's premier navigation satellite system, GPS operates via a constellation of 24 satellites (not including spares), a ground control system, and thousands of terminals, to help locate and guide military and civilian users in the air, at sea, and on the ground.

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