Successful Launch Sends Boeing-Built DIRECTV-4S Satellite to Orbit

DIRECTV-4S, a high-power satellite built by Boeing Satellite Systems, was successfully launched today aboard an Ariane 44LP rocket from the Guiana Space Center on the northeastern coast of South America. The Boeing 601HP satellite was provided to DIRECTV, Inc., by Boeing Space and Communications, a business of The Boeing Company (NSYE: BA).

Liftoff occurred at 9:35 p.m. at the launch site (4:35 p.m. PST; 12:35 a.m. Nov. 27 GMT). DIRECTV-4S' first signals were received approximately four hours later at the Hartebeesthoek tracking station in South Africa, confirming that systems are operating normally.

After orbit-raising and testing are completed, DIRECTV-4S will be stationed at 101 degrees West longitude with other DIRECTV satellites that deliver the company's nationwide digital satellite television service. DIRECTV-4S will provide DIRECTV with significant capacity to deliver additional local channels in major U.S. television markets, and it will also strengthen the redundancy of its in-orbit fleet.

"DIRECTV-4S is the fifth Boeing-built satellite to be deployed by DIRECTV," said Randy Brinkley, president of Boeing Satellite Systems. "With its successful launch, we feel a renewed pride in our long relationship with DIRECTV, a customer whose name has become synonymous with the best in satellite-delivered multichannel digital entertainment."

The launch of 9,400-pound DIRECTV-4S marks the commercial debut of two important spacecraft technologies. This is the first satellite both for DIRECTV and Boeing that employs spot beams. This technology reuses the same frequencies on multiple spot beams to reach the major television markets where DIRECTV delivers the signals of local network affiliates.

DIRECTV-4S is also the world's first commercial satellite to employ high-efficiency solar arrays with triple-junction gallium arsenide solar cells built by Spectrolab, Inc. a Boeing Satellite Systems subsidiary. Triple-junction solar cells have a three-layered structure, with each layer able to capture and convert a different portion of the solar spectrum. The DIRECTV-4S solar cells will be able to convert 24.5 percent of the sun's energy into electricity. The spacecraft's two solar arrays are together designed to deliver 8.3 kilowatts of power at the end of its 15-year design life.

The nearly 86-foot-long, 24.5-foot-wide spacecraft carries two Ku-band payloads: spot beams for local channels, and a national beam payload. The spot beam payload will use a total of 38 traveling wave-tube amplifiers (TWTAs) ranging in power from 30 to 88 watts. The national beam payload carries two active transponders with further capability for two active high-power transponders and six active low-power transponders.

DIRECTV is the nation's leading digital satellite television service provider with more than 10.3 million customers. DIRECTV and the Cyclone Design logo are trademarks of DIRECTV, Inc., a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp. HUGHES is the world's leading provider of digital television entertainment, broadband services, satellite-based private business networks, and global video and data broadcasting. The earnings of HUGHES, a unit of General Motors Corporation, are used to calculate the earnings per share attributable to the General Motors Class H common stock (NYSE: GMH). For more information, visit www.DIRECTV.com.

Boeing Space and Communications is the world's leading manufacturer of commercial communications satellites, and is also a major provider of space systems, satellites, and payloads for national defense, science and environmental applications.

The Boeing Company (NYSE: BA) is the largest aerospace company in the world and the United States' leading exporter. It is NASA's largest contractor and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft. The company's capabilities in aerospace also include rotorcraft, electronic and defense systems, missiles, rocket engines, launch vehicles, satellites, and advanced information and communication systems. The company has an extensive global reach with customers in 145 countries.

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