Customer Acceptance Granted for Boeing-Built Thuraya Satellite Mobile Communications System

Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications Company has assumed control of a turnkey satellite mobile communications system designed and built by Boeing Space and Communications (S&C), a unit of The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA]. Thuraya's acceptance marks the successful culmination of Boeing's first effort to design and deliver an integrated mobile communications system.

The system built for United Arab Emirates-based Thuraya relies on the high-power Thuraya-1 GEO-Mobile satellite delivered in October 2000 by Boeing Satellite Systems (BSS), the satellite-manufacturing arm of Boeing S&C. BSS also provided the requirements for the Thuraya ground station and user handsets, which were delivered through a subcontract to Hughes Network Systems, a unit of Hughes Electronics Corporation based in Germantown, Md.

Thuraya Chief Executive Officer Yousuf Al Sayed described Thuraya's partnership with Boeing and Hughes as "exemplary" and said it demonstrated "a successful working relationship that has effectively brought together complex and diverse functions from multiple suppliers towards a single purpose."

Available to nearly one third of the globe, the Thuraya service can provide blanket coverage to 99 countries in Europe, the Middle East, North and Central Africa, the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, a landmass inhabited by an estimated 2.3 billion people.

"We are extremely proud to have reached this unprecedented milestone with Thuraya," said Keith Reiley, executive director of the Thuraya program at BSS. "This is a complete system unlike any other, with the most advanced mobile communications payload flying today. With the end of trial operations and this final acceptance now in place, we are fully confident that Thuraya is satisfied with the technology, products and services that we have supplied."

Two Thuraya satellites were built under a $960 million contract signed in September 1997. The first spacecraft was launched in October 2000 and Thuraya's commercial service commenced in mid-2001. A second Thuraya satellite has been built as a ground spare or to expand the capacity of the system.

The satellite's on-board digital signal processor combined with a reflector provided by TRW Astro Aerospace enable the spacecraft to handle tens of thousands of phone calls simultaneously. The Thuraya digital signal processor, five times more capable than any previous Boeing digital processor, has more computing power than 3,000 Pentium III-based computers.

Thuraya is a leading regional mobile satellite telecommunications company. Established in April 1997 in the UAE as a private joint stock company, Thuraya has a shareholder base made up of 18 prominent telecommunications operators and investment houses. Thuraya is a US $1 billion mobile satellite telecommunications project that will serve about 100 nations in Europe, Africa and Asia. Besides its integrated satellite-GSM handsets, Thuraya's product offerings include a vehicular adapter, a home docking unit for indoor use and a fleet management system. For more information, visit Thuraya on the web.

Boeing Space and Communications (S&C), headquartered in Seal Beach, Calif., is the world's largest space and communications company. A unit of The Boeing Company, S&C provides integrated solutions in launch services, human space flight and exploration, missile defense, and information and communications. It is NASA's largest contractor; a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; and a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. The global enterprise has customers worldwide and manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Australia.

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