

Boeing Delta II Delivers Latest Additions to Iridium Constellation

Boeing Delta II Delivers Latest Additions to Iridium Constellation

A Boeing Delta II rocket launched the latest additions to the Iridium satellite constellation Monday from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. at 9:44 a.m. PST.

The Delta II launch vehicle deployed five satellites into low-Earth orbit to serve as spares for Iridium Satellite's worldwide communications network. Monday's launch of IS-1 marks the first Delta mission of 2002 and the 101st Boeing Delta II mission since 1989.

The first satellite was placed into orbit 62 minutes into the mission, followed by the other four within 23 minutes.

"We've teamed with Iridium since the early 1990s and the Delta II team is proud to add to the constellation again," said Jay Witzling, vice president and deputy program manager of Delta and Titan programs. "I've been in this business for many years, and have seen many launches, but it's still a thrill to see the rocket fly and to place a customer's spacecraft successfully into its proper orbit."

To date, Boeing Delta II launch vehicles have successfully placed 60 of Iridium's satellites into orbit, starting with the initial launch in May 1997. The Boeing Delta team also has extensive experience with dual and multiple payload missions for government and commercial customers. Recent dual payload Delta II missions include Jason-1/TIMED and E0-1/SAC-C.

Iridium Satellite LLC provides global satellite voice and data solutions with complete coverage of the Earth (including oceans, airways, and polar regions). Through a constellation of 66 low-Earth orbiting (LEO) satellites operated by Boeing, Iridium delivers essential communications services to and from remote areas where no other form of communication is available.

"In the past two years, the constellation has not required the use of any in-orbit spare," said Dannie Stamp, chief operating officer of Iridium Satellite LLC. "Through a robust architecture and a highly-skilled team of operators and engineers, the reliability of the Iridium satellite constellation is far exceeding original design predictions."

The service is ideally suited for industries such as maritime, aviation, government/military, emergency/humanitarian services, mining, forestry, oil & gas, and heavy construction. Iridium currently provides service to the U.S. Department of Defense under a multi-year contract. Iridium works with more than 20 service partners to sell and support the service globally.

In December 2000, Iridium Satellite LLC acquired the assets of Iridium LLC including the satellite constellation, terrestrial network, Iridium real property and intellectual capital.

The next Delta II launch is a U.S. Air Force Global Positioning Satellite from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.

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.

###

IS-1 mission website
