Initial Flight Data Received on Delta IV Delivery of DSCS

A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Delta IV rocket successfully delivered to space on Monday the DSCS III A3 communications satellite for the U.S. Air Force Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) program.

The satellite will provide defense officials and battlefield commanders with secure-voice and high data rate communications, along with transmitting space communications and early warning data to key government systems and users.

"This was a terrific team effort," said Will Trafton, vice president and general manager, Boeing Expendable Launch Systems. "The Delta, EELV and DSCS teams did a very professional job of pulling this mission together. We're just so pleased that Boeing has contributed to the success of this mission for the Department of Defense and for our men and women in uniform around the world."

Results from initial data reviews show the orbital insertion of the DSCS III A3 satellite by the Delta IV Medium launch vehicle was right on target, well within the mission requirements and predicted accuracy. The apogee and perigee altitudes of the spacecraft after separation were within 15 and 1.2 nautical miles of target, respectively, and the orbit inclination angle was exactly as targeted.

"The accuracy of this launch will contribute to the longevity of the DSCS satellite lifespan," said Dan Collins, vice president and Delta program director. "We're proud to be a part of the U.S. Air Force efforts and will continue to support the EELV team to the best of our ability."

"It was an absolutely spectacular launch," said Col. Susan Mashiko, director of the U.S. Air Force EELV program. "In terms of national security and national security payloads, it couldn't have come at a better time."

The Delta IV carrying DSCS III A3 also carried four on-board cameras, which enabled the Air Force and Delta launch teams to view spacecraft separation of a DSCS satellite for the very first time.

"It was really spectacular to see the satellite separate," said Christine Anderson, Military Satellite Communications Program Director for the Air Force. "We have never seen that -- it was the first time we've had a camera taking pictures. It was super."

The Delta IV lifted off at 7:59 p.m. EST from Space Launch Complex 37B at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The Boeing Delta engineering team will continue to review all flight data in the coming weeks in preparation for the next Delta IV flight, which is the second U.S. Air Force EELV program mission, DSCS III B6.

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Boeing Delta website

For further information:
Robert Villanueva
(714) 372-2089 Office
robert.s.villanueva@boeing.com
Larry Salazar
(714) 372-4734 Office
larry.p.Salazar@boeing.com
Boeing Launch Hotline
(714) 896-4770