Sea Launch Sails to Equator for the Launch of Thuraya-2

The Odyssey Launch Platform and the Sea Launch Commander departed Sea Launch Home Port this week, for the launch of the Thuraya-2 satellite. Liftoff is scheduled for June 10, in a 44-minute launch window that opens at 6:56 am PDT (13:56:00 GMT).

The two Sea Launch vessels will travel from Sea Launch Home Port, in the Port of Long Beach, to the launch site on the Equator at 154^{o} West Longitude, where a 72-hour countdown will begin upon arrival. Once the platform is ballasted to launch depth, the team will perform final tests on the rocket and spacecraft, and prepare for launch operations. The 200-foot Zenit-3SL rocket will lift the 5177 kg (11,413 lb) Thuraya-2 satellite to geosynchronous transfer orbit with a liftoff thrust of 1.6 million lbs.

Thuraya-2 was built by Boeing [NYSE:BA] for the Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications Company, of United Arab Emirates, and shipped from its satellite manufacturing facility in El Segundo, Calif. The GEO-Mobile (GEM) model satellite uses a Boeing 702 body-stabilized design and integrates a ground segment and user handsets to provide a range of cellular-like voice and data services over a vast geographic region. Sea Launch successfully inserted the first Boeing GEM model, Thuraya-1, to orbit in October 2000. It is the heaviest commercial spacecraft launched successfully to date.

Thuraya-2 will enable Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications to continue to grow and expand its successful business, providing communications services to the people of 100 nations in the Middle East, Europe, North and Central Africa, and South and Central Asia. Thuraya's advanced satellite telecommunications provides blanket border-to-border coverage to nearly one third of the globe. Based in Abu Dhabi, Thuraya offers uninterrupted and seamless services that link urban and rural areas, and ensure call continuity over regions with fragmented conventional telecommunication networks.

Sea Launch Company, LLC, headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., is a world leader in providing heavy-lift commercial launch services. This multinational partnership offers the most direct and cost-effective route to geostationary orbit. With the advantage of a launch site on the Equator, the proven Zenit-3SL rocket can lift a heavier spacecraft mass or provide longer life on orbit, offering best value plus schedule assurance. Sea Launch has a current backlog of 16 firm launch contracts. For additional information, visit the Sea Launch website.

Note to editors: Sea Launch will carry a live satellite feed and streaming video of the entire mission on the day of launch. We will post transponder coordinates as well as additional information and high resolution images on the media site.

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