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A successful launch today lifted into orbit the 11th UHF Follow-On spacecraft built and delivered by Boeing [NYSE: BA] to provide secure communications to the warfighter and other military personnel worldwide.

UFO F11, built for the Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) in San Diego, will sustain a constellation that enables military personnel in all service branches to communicate between ships, aircraft and mobile ground terminals through severe weather and ground cover. The spacecraft's advanced UHF digital receiver will provide greater channel capacity than previous UFO satellites.

The 3,000 lb (1,364 kg) UFO F11 satellite, built by Boeing Satellite Systems in El Segundo, Calif., rocketed to geosynchronous transfer orbit aboard an Atlas III launch vehicle. Lift-off occurred at 9:30 p.m. EST (Dec. 18, 2:30 a.m. GMT) from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The spacecraft separated from the launch vehicle at approximately 10:02 p.m. and its first signals were received shortly afterward at the U.S. Air Force's Satellite Control Facility on the island of Diego Garcia, confirming normal operation. F11 will be positioned at 172 degrees East longitude at the equator.

Boeing previously delivered 10 UFO spacecraft under this contract, originally awarded in July 1988 and now valued at approximately \$2.1 billion.

"Over the past 15 years, Boeing has worked closely with the U.S. Navy to provide the UFO satellite constellation, which today serves all branches of the U.S. military throughout the world," said Dave Ryan, vice president and general manager of Boeing Satellite Systems. "I am confident that, after a thorough on-orbit checkout, this latest UFO satellite will prove its worth to the warfighter by adding critically needed communications capacity."

UFO F11 carries a new ultra-high frequency digital receiver that will provide additional UHF channels and greater flexibility in configuring communication services. The spacecraft's extremely high frequency communications subsystem will provide enhanced antijam telemetry, command, broadcast, and fleet interconnectivity communications, using advanced signal processing techniques.

Boeing is also part of a team led by Lockheed Martin competing for the next phase of the Mobile User Objective System (MUOS), a next-generation narrowband tactical satellite communications system for the U.S. Navy that will provide significantly improved, assured communications for the mobile warfighter. The team also includes General Dynamics. SPAWAR is expected to award a multibillion-dollar Risk Reduction, Design Development/Acquisition and Operations Support contract in first quarter 2004.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a \$25 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

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