Sea Launch Sets Sail for DIRECTV 7S Mission

The Odyssey Launch Platform and the Sea Launch Commander departed Sea Launch Home Port this week for the equatorial launch site in the Pacific Ocean. Sea Launch is preparing to launch the DIRECTV 7S broadcast satellite for DIRECTV, Inc., on May 4, at the opening of a two-hour launch window, at 5:22 am PDT (12:22:00 GMT).

The Sea Launch vessels are now sailing from Long Beach, Calif., to the launch site at 154 degrees West Longitude. Upon arrival, the launch team will initiate a 72-hour countdown, ballasting the Launch Platform to launch depth, and performing final tests on the launch system and spacecraft. In Sea Launch's second launch this year of a Space Systems/Loral (SS/L) spacecraft, a Zenit-3SL vehicle will lift the 5,483 kg (12,063 lb.) DIRECTV 7S satellite to geosynchronous transfer orbit (GTO), on its way to a final orbital position at 119 degrees West Longitude.

DIRECTV 7S, the second spot beam satellite in the DIRECTV fleet, will use highly focused spot beam technology to provide DIRECTV with the capacity to deliver local channels to 41 additional markets, expanding local channel coverage to a total of 105 markets. The satellite is also capable of operating from 101 degrees West Longitude, the primary orbital slot for DIRECTV. Built at SS/L's state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Palo Alto, Calif., the 1300 series spacecraft is one of several high capacity direct-to-home (DTH) broadcast satellites SS/L has produced for DIRECTV, the leading U.S. digital television provider.

Sea Launch Company, LLC, headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., and marketed through Boeing Launch Services, is the world's most reliable commercial launch services provider. With the advantage of the only 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 offers the most direct and cost-effective route to geostationary orbit. For additional information, visit the Sea Launch website.

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