Sea Launch Team Prepares for Telstar 18 Mission

The Odyssey Launch Platform and the Sea Launch Commander departed Sea Launch Home Port this week in preparation for the launch of Loral's Telstar 18 communications satellite on June 28, in a two-hour launch window that will open at 8:59 pm PDT (3:59 GMT, June 29).

The Sea Launch vessels are sailing from Long Beach, Calif., to the equatorial 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 for stability, and performing final tests on the launch system and its satellite. In Sea Launch's third launch this year of a Space Systems/Loral (SS/L) spacecraft, a Zenit-3SL vehicle will lift the 4640 kg (10,229 lb) spacecraft to geosynchronous transfer orbit, on its way to a final orbital position at 138 degrees East Longitude.

Built by SS/L and operated by Loral Skynet -- both subsidiaries of Loral Space & Communications -- the high-powered 1300-model spacecraft will carry 54 active transponders, 16 Ku-band transponders and 38 C-band transponders. The Ku-band will reach China, India, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea, while the C-band capacity will cover Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific islands and Hawaii. The satellite will host cable programming, direct-to-home broadcasting, Internet, VSAT and IP-based two-way services within Asia while providing an inter-connect to the United States. Designed for a 13-year lifespan, Sea Launch's direct insertion into equatorial orbit is expected to yield several additional years of service for the spacecraft.

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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