Sea Launch Prepares for Liftoff of Spaceway Satellite on April 26

The Sea Launch team has arrived at its equatorial launch site in preparation for the launch of DIRECTV's Spaceway satellite on Tuesday, April 26, at 12:31:30 am PDT (07:31:30 GMT), at the opening of a half-hour launch window. All systems are proceeding on schedule.

With launch site operations now underway, the marine crew is ballasting the Odyssey Launch Platform to its launch depth to ensure stability. The Sea Launch Commander (Assembly and Command Ship), will be stationed alongside the Odyssey, throughout the weekend, frequently connected by a link-bridge that enables foot traffic between the two vessels. The team will initiate a 72-hour launch countdown tomorrow, April 23. On the day before launch, the platform will be evacuated, with all personnel safely stationed on the ship, three miles from the platform, throughout launch operations. The rocket will be rolled out of its environmentally-protected hangar and automatically erected on the launch pad at L-27 hours.

Sea Launch's Zenit-3SL vehicle will lift the 6,080 kg (13,376 lb.) Spaceway satellite to geosynchronous transfer orbit, on its way to a final orbital position at 102.8 degrees West Longitude. The Boeing 702 model spacecraft, with a design life of 12 years, was manufactured at Boeing's Satellite Development Center in El Segundo, Calif. It includes a flexible payload with a fully steerable downlink antenna that can be reconfigured on orbit to seamlessly address market conditions. It is the most complex commercial satellite system that Boeing has ever built.

Spaceway, Sea Launch's third mission for DIRECTV, is one of four Boeing-built Ka-band satellites that DIRECTV has scheduled for launch over the next three years as part of an historic expansion of programming capacity that will enable DIRECTV to deliver more than 1,500 local and national High Definition channels and other advanced programming services to consumers nationwide by 2007.

Sea Launch will carry a live satellite feed and streaming video of the entire mission, beginning at 12:15 am PDT (07:15:00 GMT). To downlink the broadcast, transponder coordinates are posted at: www.boeing.com/nosearch/sealaunch/broadcast.html

A simultaneous webcast will be posted at: http://www.sea-launch.com/current_index_webcast.html

Sea Launch Company, LLC, headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., and marketed through Boeing Launch Services (www.boeing.com/launch), is the world's most reliable commercial launch services provider. 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, yielding 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 at: www.sea-launch.com

During the mission, press may contact: Dan Beck, 562.951.7088 or 562.951.7388

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