

Boeing GPS Ground Station Test Validates Ability to Command GPS Fleet

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Boeing [NYSE: BA] has successfully completed a live demonstration of the Global Positioning System (GPS) ground station, which, when fully operational, will control the 32 GPS satellites now in orbit as well as those that will join the fleet in the coming months.

Boeing is under contract to migrate the current GPS ground control system to a distributed Unix-based system beginning in April 2007. The system currently being tested is known as the Architecture Evolution Plan (AEP).

"This live navigation mission met or exceeded all GPS performance requirements," said GPS Program Director John Duddy. "The system worked flawlessly as designed, and I want to congratulate the team for the outstanding results in what the Air Force considers the largest and most complex upgrade in the 30-year history of the GPS program."

The AEP system conducted a three-hour contact of a Block IIR satellite in the new Master Control Station at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo. The ground station sent test commands, navigation updates and verified the contents of the satellite's memory. It then monitored the return telemetry. The AEP system provides enhanced operator capabilities and supports Boeing's upcoming GPS IIF constellation.

Boeing is building 12 GPS Block IIF satellites under contract from the GPS Wing at the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles, and expects to deliver the first satellite in 2007. Block IIF spacecraft are expected to carry new capabilities such as full onboard encrypted military code, a new civil signal known as L-5, crosslink enhancements, signal power increases and greater design life. Through its work on GPS IIF and its preliminary design work for the upcoming GPS III competition, Boeing is working closely with the U.S. Air Force to deliver new, advanced GPS capabilities to the military, civil government and the general public as early as possible.

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