

Boeing Marks 18th Anniversary of GPS Block II Program

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Boeing [NYSE: BA] and the U.S. Air Force marked the 18th anniversary of the activation of the first Global Positioning System Block II satellite on April 14. The GPS Block II/IIA constellation went on to achieve 100 percent mission success, with 28 flawless launches aboard Delta II launch vehicles.

"This milestone really said a lot about our GPS team," said U.S. Air Force Col. Wesley Ballenger, GPS program manager at the Space and Missile Systems Wing at Los Angeles Air Force Base. "It highlighted how hard the Air Force and our Boeing teammates worked on the advances that made GPS II and IIA icons of quality and reliability."

The GPS Block II constellation has shown remarkable on-orbit durability. Each satellite launched between 1989 and 1997 had a six-year mean mission duration. Half of them remain functional today, exceeding their life expectancy by an average of more than 12 years. The U.S. Air Force and Boeing have produced 40 Block I, II and IIA GPS satellites after more than 30 years of teamwork.

"This record is a testament to the Boeing team's dedication to quality and customer service," said Boeing GPS Program Director John Duddy. "The GPS team takes great pride in providing this crucial, 24-hour worldwide service and really knows what it takes to satisfy customers."

Building on this success, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems is building 12 next-generation GPS Block IIF satellites under contract from the Navstar GPS Wing at the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles. The Block IIF satellites are expected to carry new capabilities such as full expanded 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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