Boeing GPS Ground Control System Keeps Navigation Satellites Operational

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ST. LOUIS, Feb. 26, 2008 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] today reported the continuing success of its Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) ground control system that operates the on-orbit constellation of 32 GPS satellites built by Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

"The Boeing ground control system, known as the Architecture Evolution Plan (AEP), was deployed seamlessly in September 2007 and has the technical flexibility to operate not only the oldest GPS satellites in operation -- many of which have operated for twice their design life -- but also the GPS satellites of the future," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "The GPS fleet provides important services to military and civilian users who rely on it for vehicle location and navigation assistance. The fleet shifted from one ground control system to another almost overnight, and the fact that the change went unnoticed underscores the successful implementation of this new system."

Upgrading the previous 20-year-old command and control system to the new system streamlines operations, increases efficiency and makes it possible for the ground control system to handle new capabilities as they become available, including those on GPS IIF and GPS IIR-M. It also marks the first time that a Boeing ground control system is being used to operate satellites built by another manufacturer.

In December 2007, a Raytheon team that includes Boeing was among two teams selected to compete for the final ground control system upgrade contract, which is expected to be awarded in mid-2009.

Operated by the U.S. Air Force 50th Space Wing, the GPS satellite constellation is a worldwide timing and navigation system that supports land, sea and airborne navigation; surveying; geophysical exploration, mapping and geodesy; vehicle location systems; aerial refueling and rendezvous; search and rescue operations; and a wide variety of additional applications.

Last week, Boeing commemorated the 30th anniversary of the first GPS satellite, GPS I, which was launched by an Atlas F vehicle on Feb. 22, 1978. Boeing has delivered 40 GPS satellites to date that together have accumulated 500 years of on-orbit service.

Continuing its commitment to GPS spacecraft, Boeing is producing 12 GPS IIF satellites, the first of which is scheduled for launch early next year. Boeing also is competing for the follow-on GPS III contract that is valued at approximately $5 billion, if all options are exercised. An award decision is scheduled for early April and includes the development and production of up to 12 GPS III satellites.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32.1 billion business with 71,000 employees worldwide.
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