Boeing's 1st Wideband Global SATCOM Satellite Now Operational



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ST. LOUIS, May 12, 2008 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] today announced that the U.S. Air Force has placed the first Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) satellite into operation over the Pacific region. The Boeing-built satellite transitioned to operations on April 16, following extensive satellite and ground system tests conducted by the government with support from Boeing engineers.

"The successful launch, checkout and handover of WGS-1 went smoothly and is a testament to the great work of the combined government and contractor team," said Brig. Gen. Susan Mashiko, commander of the Military Satellite Communications Systems Wing at the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles. "The performance of this first WGS satellite is nothing short of exceptional."

WGS is the first operational SATCOM system supporting the government's transformational communications architecture. Each satellite has the capacity to transmit information at rates of more than three gigabits per second. This is more than 10 times the capacity of the government's Defense Satellite Communications System, known as DSCS. During operational testing last month, the government successfully transmitted a record-breaking 440 megabits-per-second communications test signal through the satellite. WGS-1 was launched Oct. 10, 2007, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Base, Fla., aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V launch vehicle.

"WGS-1 is the highest capacity Department of Defense communications satellite on orbit," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "WGS-1 is now providing essential support to military operations overseas, and Boeing looks forward to launching the second and third WGS satellites in the coming months."

WGS is also the world's first satellite to incorporate multi-beam X-band communications through phased array antennas, and the first satellite capable of cross-banding signals between X-band and Ka-band.

The operational testing of WGS also demonstrated the satellite's compatibility with a variety of ground-based terminals, validating WGS planning, management and control concept of operations (CONOPS). The CONOPS validation tests were conducted with extensive human and software interactions between geographically dispersed planning, management, and control centers.

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Contact Info:
Dave Garlick
Space & Intelligence Systems
(310) 364-8286
dave.garlick@boeing.com
Lewis Brinson
Space & Intelligence Systems
(310) 364-6125
lewis.b.brinson@boeing.com