Boeing to Launch 4th Earth-Observation Satellite for Italy

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 19 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The Boeing Company , through its commercial launch business, has received a contract to launch the fourth satellite for the COSMO-SkyMed (Constellation of Small Satellites for Mediterranean basin Observation) program for Thales Alenia Space Italia, prime contractor of the Italian Space Agency.

The COSMO-SkyMed spacecraft is expected to be launched in 2010 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., on a Delta II vehicle in the 7420-10 configuration.

"Boeing Launch Services is honored to provide the fourth COSMO-SkyMed mission for Thales Alenia Space," said Boeing Launch Services President Ken Heinly. "The proven reliability of the Delta II rocket has enabled the success of the COSMO-SkyMed program, and this fourth satellite will deliver the full capabilities of the system."

Boeing Launch Services will procure the launch vehicle and related support from United Launch Alliance, a Boeing-Lockheed Martin joint venture.

To support a rapid initial operating capability, Boeing successfully launched the first three COSMO-SkyMed satellites from Vandenberg within the 17-month period between June 2007 and October 2008.

Thales Alenia Space Italia developed the COSMO-SkyMed program for the Italian Space Agency and the Italian Ministry of Defense. It is an end-to-end Earth-observation system comprised of four medium-sized satellites and supporting ground stations, which provide orbit-control systems and data reception and processing. The system takes imagery of the Earth using an X- Band Synthetic Aperture Radar instrument capable of operating in all visibility conditions. Its institutional and commercial users include members of the civil, scientific and defense communities.

Boeing is committed to strengthening its more than 40-year partnership with the Italian aeronautics industry and to expanding its collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Defense. Thales Alenia Space has provided Delta II tanks to Boeing since 2001 and built the Cupola and Harmony Node 2 elements of the International Space Station (ISS) for the European Space Agency. Boeing is the prime contractor for the ISS.

Boeing Launch Services is a customer-focused subsidiary that provides business development, sales, procurement and program management of Delta launch services for commercial customers. It is part of the Space Exploration division of Boeing Integrated Defense Systems and is based in Huntington Beach, Calif.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems (http://www.boeing.com/ids/) is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32.1 billion business with 71,000 employees worldwide.

SOURCE: The Boeing Company

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