Boeing Completes Ground Tests to Prepare for 1st GPS IIF Satellite Launch

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Sept. 22, 2009-- Boeing [NYSE: BA] has successfully completed key ground tests that help pave the way for next year's launch of the first Global Positioning System (GPS) IIF satellite.

Built at Boeing's El Segundo satellite factory, GPS IIF Space Vehicle 2 (SV-2) was tested at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida from May through August in preparation for the launch of SV-1, the first of 12 GPS IIF next-generation navigation satellites.

SV-2 successfully completed a consolidated system test (CST), which is a set of one-time, system-level design verification and validation tests involving the space vehicle, the ground-based control segment, and user equipment. In addition, GPS master control stations successfully commanded the space vehicle as they will do when the satellite is in operational orbit. SV-2 was also used as a "pathfinder" to validate transportation equipment and processes, as well as launch site test procedures and equipment.

"These successful tests reflect a combined effort from the Air Force and Boeing to ensure that the first GPS IIF satellite is on track to meet the Air Force's current launch commitments," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager of Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "The tests also demonstrate compatibility between the space vehicle and ground control segment, highlighting Boeing's ability to integrate complex space and ground elements."

Boeing is installing the final pieces of hardware on SV-1 and preparing it for its final cycle of environmental vacuum testing to confirm the spacecraft's integrity for launch. SV-2 was returned to El Segundo on Sept. 3 and will follow SV-1 into environmental vacuum testing in preparation for its own launch.

GPS IIF is the product of Boeing's experience with 39 successful satellites from the GPS Block I and Block II/IIA missions and more than 30 years of teamwork with the Air Force. GPS IIF features twice the navigational accuracy of heritage satellites, more robust signals for commercial aviation and search and rescue, and greater resistance to jamming in hostile environments. GPS IIF will form the core of the GPS constellation for many years to come.

GPS is a space-based, worldwide navigation system providing users with highly accurate, three-dimensional position, navigation and timing information 24 hours a day in all weather conditions.

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, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32 billion business with 70,000 employees worldwide.

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