Boeing's 2nd Wideband Global SATCOM Satellite Fully Operational

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Oct. 6, 2009 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] has been informed by the U.S. Air Force that the second Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) satellite began supporting on-the-ground warfighters on Aug. 18, providing urgently needed communications services to U.S. and allied forces in the Middle East and central Asia.

The Boeing-built WGS-2 satellite was launched on April 3 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., and handed over to the Air Force on June 15 for extensive on-orbit testing. The first WGS satellite began supporting U.S. and allied operations across the entire Pacific in April 2008 and has met and exceeded the Air Force's expectations.

"With its outstanding capacity, operational flexibility and performance, WGS is fast becoming the satellite communications workhorse for the U.S. armed forces," said Col. Bill Harding, Vice Commander of the Military Satellite Communications Systems Wing at the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles. "The smooth handover of WGS-2 earlier this summer and the successful start of operations clearly demonstrate the government and contractor team's effective plan for the WGS system."

The WGS satellites -- part of the U.S. Defense Department's highest-capacity satellite communications system -- address the military's growing need for high-bandwidth communications. The WGS satellites are augmenting and will eventually replace the Defense Satellite Communications System (DSCS) constellation. One WGS satellite can support more than 12 times the capacity of one DSCS satellite.

"Boeing is committed to the success of the WGS mission because it provides such valuable service to the brave men and women in our military services, who need and deserve the best," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "The successful operation of WGS-2 marks another great milestone for the WGS system and contributes to the overall success of Boeing's satellite programs this year."

The WGS satellites are built on the proven Boeing 702 platform with 13 kilowatts of power, reconfigurable coverage areas, and the ability to connect X-band and Ka-band users anywhere within their field of view via an onboard digital channelizer. The cross-banding capability and reconfigurable X- and Ka-band coverages are not available on any other satellite communications system.

Boeing is building three Block I and three Block II WGS satellites for the Air Force. WGS-3 is the final satellite in the Block I series and is scheduled for launch later this year. The Block II satellites will include a radio frequency bypass designed to support airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms requiring additional bandwidth and are planned for launch in 2011 and 2012.

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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