Boeing's 3rd Wideband Global SATCOM Satellite Shipped to Cape Canaveral

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Oct. 14, 2009 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] announced today that the third Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) satellite built for the U.S. Air Force was shipped on Sept. 28 to Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., where it will be tested and prepared for a November launch.

WGS-3 completes the initial constellation of three WGS satellites, which will provide high-capacity X-band and Ka-band communications to U.S. forces and allies across all current theaters of operation around the world. WGS-1 has been in operation over the Pacific since April 2008, and WGS-2 has been operating over the Middle East since August 2009. Both satellites have met or exceeded mission requirements throughout their testing and operational phases.

"With its extraordinary increase in satellite communications capacity and flexibility, WGS helps our warfighters more effectively execute their missions on land, at sea and in the air," said Brig. Gen. Samuel Greaves, Vice Commander of the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems Center in Los Angeles. "This is another great milestone for the WGS team, which is performing superbly and setting the standards for getting these critical communications assets into space and into operational use."

"WGS addresses our military's ever-growing appetite for high-bandwidth satellite communications," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "We're now working with the Air Force to determine how future WGS satellites could be enhanced to handle missions involving airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and communications-on-the-move."

WGS-3 was flown on an Air Force C-5 transport from Boeing's Satellite Development Center in El Segundo to Cape Canaveral last month. Before being shipped, WGS-3 completed mission assurance reviews and challenging factory tests that simulated the stress of the satellite's mission. The satellite successfully completed vibration tests and thermal vacuum tests. The vibration tests replicated the stresses of launch. Thermal vacuum tests were conducted in an airless chamber, with the satellite operating at full power, and subjected to extremes of heat and cold to simulate the working conditions it will experience in space.

At Cape Canaveral, WGS-3 will undergo about six weeks of prelaunch testing and processing, including fueling, encapsulation inside the launch vehicle fairing, and integration with the United Launch Alliance (ULA) Delta IV launch vehicle.

Boeing built two previous WGS satellites and is currently building three more for the Air Force. WGS-3 is the final satellite in the Block I series. Three Block II satellites are planned for launch in 2011, 2012 and 2013.

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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