3rd Boeing WGS Satellite Set to Launch From Cape Canaveral

CAPE CANAVERAL, Nov. 30, 2009 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] announced today that the third Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) satellite it has built for the U.S. Air Force has completed prelaunch testing. The satellite is ready for its scheduled Dec. 2 launch aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

WGS is the U.S. Department of Defense's highest-capacity communications satellite system. The launch of WGS-3 will mark the completion of the initial constellation of three satellites that provide high-data-rate communications for U.S. forces and allies around the world.

"This launch represents another huge leap in communications capabilities for U.S. warfighters and allies around the world," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "These satellites support a broad range of communications, from full-motion video beamed down from unmanned aerial vehicles, to distribution of maps and imagery to ground troops, to quality-of-life services such as news broadcasts and e-mail delivery to deployed troops. For all branches of our military, WGS saves lives and makes lives better every day."

WGS-3 will be placed into geosynchronous Earth orbit over the Atlantic Ocean. The satellite joins WGS-1, which entered service over the Pacific Ocean in April 2008, and WGS-2, which began operations over the Middle East in August 2009. Both operational satellites meet and, in some cases, exceed mission requirements.

WGS satellites are built on the proven Boeing 702 platform with 13 kilowatts of power. The payload features 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 -- features not available on any other military communications satellite.

Boeing is building three more WGS satellites for the Air Force with enhancements that include a radio frequency bypass to support airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms requiring additional bandwidth. Satellites four through six are planned for launch in 2011 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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