Boeing's 3rd GOES Satellite Sends 1st Signals From Space

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., March 5, 2010 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] has received the first on-orbit signals from the third Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) built by Boeing for NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The satellite, GOES-P, is healthy and ready to begin thruster firings to move to its on-orbit test location. GOES-P is a Boeing 601 satellite that will provide enhanced Earth-observation and weather-monitoring services.

GOES-P launched on a Delta IV rocket at 6:57 p.m. Eastern time on March 4 from Space Launch Complex 37B at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. Controllers confirmed initial contact with the spacecraft today at 12:52 a.m. Eastern time at the NASA Deep Space Network Canberra ground station in Australia. Boeing Launch Services procured the vehicle and mission services from United Launch Alliance.

"GOES-P's precision imaging and navigation technologies will improve weather forecasting by providing image data that is two to three times more accurately located," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager of Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems. "We look forward to working with NASA and NOAA in the months ahead as GOES-P is tested and deployed as an on-orbit spare that can be called immediately to action, especially during emergencies."

GOES-P will be placed in geosynchronous orbit at 89.5 degrees west longitude for approximately five months of on-orbit operational testing. Following NASA and NOAA's acceptance, GOES-P will join GOES-14 (formerly called GOES-O) in storage at 105 degrees west longitude to operate as backups for primary satellites GOES-11 and GOES-13. GOES-13 is in the process of being activated to replace GOES-12. Together, the satellites will improve weather forecasting with sharper vision and longer life and help NOAA's Storm Prediction Center monitor severe weather events.

The GOES N-P series represents the newest generation of satellite technology and a significant improvement over earlier environmental systems. The prime instrument on GOES-P, the imager, captures images of the Earth with a resolution accuracy of 1 kilometer from an altitude of 22,240 miles above the Earth's surface. The satellite's highly stable optical bench enables more accurate predictions of storm location and movement by protecting the operational instruments from thermal or motion disruptions. GOES-P also can store enough power to operate during the eclipse season, when there is no sunlight to power its solar array.

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