1st Boeing SBSS Satellite Sends Initial Signals from Space

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Sept. 26, 2010-- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has acquired initial on-orbit signals from the first Space Based Space Surveillance (SBSS) satellite following its launch at 9:41 p.m. Pacific time on Sept. 25 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. The signals indicate that the satellite is functioning normally and is ready to begin orbital maneuvers and operational testing.

The SBSS Block 10 satellite, which was built for the U.S. Air Force by a Boeing-led team that includes Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., was launched by an Orbital Sciences Minotaur IV rocket. The first signals from the advanced space surveillance satellite were received a short time later. The Boeing SBSS Satellite Operations Center at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., confirmed that the satellite is healthy.

When it goes into operation with the Air Force, the SBSS satellite will be the service's only space-based sensor capable of detecting and monitoring debris, satellites and other space objects without the disruptions from weather, atmosphere or time of day that limit ground-based observations. The satellite and its ground system will dramatically improve the accuracy and timeliness of tracking and monitoring capabilities, and provide the flexibility to quickly respond to new and changing mission requirements.

"The United States depends on space assets for security, communications, weather forecasting, and many other essential services," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager, Boeing Space & Intelligence Systems. "America's adversaries recognize this increasing dependence, which makes the need for enhanced space situational awareness more and more vital. Today, the Air Force and Boeing SBSS team are delivering this advanced capability to the nation."

Shortly after launch, the SBSS satellite began an automated sequence that deployed solar arrays, pointed them at the sun, and initialized satellite operations. For the next two weeks, operators will perform health checks on the satellite bus, followed by payload checkout. Tests include sending simulated space situational awareness tasks to the SBSS Satellite Operations Center, which will send commands to the satellite and collect data from those tasks for the Air Force Joint Space Operations Center. The SBSS system is expected to be ready to perform its mission and be turned over to the Air Force within 60 days.

"The successful launch of SBSS is an important milestone to ensure that this nation's assets are protected," said David L. Taylor, president and CEO of Ball Aerospace. "We are proud to be a leader in providing critical technology development to the Air Force's space situational awareness mission."

Boeing is responsible for overall program management; systems engineering and integration; design and development of the SBSS Satellite Operations Center at Schriever; and system operations and maintenance. Ball Aerospace developed, designed, manufactured, integrated and tested the satellite, using the Boeing-built onboard mission data processor.

Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. supports critical missions of important national agencies such as the Department of Defense, NASA, NOAA and other U.S. government and commercial entities. The company develops and manufactures spacecraft, advanced instruments and sensors, components, data exploitation systems and RF solutions for strategic, tactical and scientific applications.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Defense, Space & Security is one of the world's largest defense, space and security 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 Defense, Space & Security is a $34 billion business with 68,000 employees worldwide.

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