Boeing on Schedule to Deliver Next-Gen Tracking and Data Relay Satellite

Satellites extend NASA's ability to transmit information among spacecraft and ground terminals

Key performance tests and work with General Dynamics on ground segment complete

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Oct. 29, 2012 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] is on schedule to deliver the next-generation series of Tracking and Data Relay Satellites (TDRS), which will increase NASA's signal processing and transmission capabilities among the Hubble Space Telescope, the International Space Station and dozens of unmanned scientific satellites in low Earth orbit.

TDRS K, the first to offer that increase in operational effectiveness, will be delivered for launch by the end of this year.

The satellite successfully completed all environmental, functional and performance tests, including vibration and acoustic tests and final flight functional testing. It soon will be packaged for transport to Cape Canaveral, Fla., where it will complete its final integration and test and be prepared for launch.

"The TDRS satellites provide NASA with crucial crosslink communications between orbiting spacecraft and control and data processing facilities on Earth," said Craig Cooning, vice president and general manager of Boeing Space & Intelligence Systems. "TDRS K is a major step toward improving how high-resolution images, video, voice and data are transmitted."

TDRS K is one of three TDRS satellites in production. TDRS L, which is scheduled to launch in 2014, is in final space vehicle testing at the Boeing Satellite Development Center in El Segundo. Production of TDRS-M is expected to begin this month.

Boeing and General Dynamics also upgraded existing ground terminals to be compatible with the TDRS K series. The team recently completed the final course of ground segment testing and delivered the ground segment to NASA.

Boeing built the TDRS H, I and J satellites that are currently in operation.

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