Boeing: World's First All-Electric Propulsion Satellite Begins Operations

Boeing-built 702SP satellite transitions to customer ABS ahead of schedule

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Sept. 10, 2015– The world's first all-electric propulsion satellite, built by Boeing [NYSE: BA] for Bermuda-based ABS, is now operational after an on-orbit handover on August 31. The ABS-3A, a 702SP (small platform) satellite, expands ABS' communications services in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

"The operational ABS-3A satellite and ABS-2A, launching in early 2016, will further strengthen and solidify our global expansion and offer flexible capacity to our growing fleet," said Tom Choi, CEO of ABS. "We believe Boeing's innovative portfolio can help us to affordably grow now and in the future."

The ABS-3A spacecraft was the world's first all-electric propulsion satellite to be built and launched – part of a stacked pair launched in March with a 702SP satellite built for Eutelsat, based in Paris. The spacecraft's all-electric xenon-ion propulsion system contains a sufficient quantity of the inert, non-hazardous element xenon to extend the satellite's operations beyond the expected spacecraft design life of 15 years.

"With a successful launch, testing and execution of orbit operations, we were able to deliver the first 702SP to ABS about one month earlier than planned," said Mark Spiwak, president, Boeing Satellite Systems International. "The 702SP product line was designed to bring the latest technology into the hands of customers seeking adaptable and affordable solutions. In addition, the 702SP's patented dual-launch capability helps customers share launch costs, which can significantly lower overall expenses for a satellite owner."

Boeing is under contract to build a second 702SP satellite for ABS, designated ABS-2A, which will be delivered and launched early next year.

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