5th Boeing GPS IIF Spacecraft Sends Initial Signals from Space

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., Feb. 21, 2014 -- A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Global Positioning System (GPS) IIF satellite has sent initial signals from space after its launch Feb. 20, joining four other advanced versions of the spacecraft that are improving position, navigation and timing information for millions of civilian and military users around the world.

GPS IIF-5 launched at 8:59 p.m. Eastern time from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta IV rocket, and Boeing received the satellite's first signals approximately three and a half hours later. It will undergo on-orbit activation, checkout and testing before joining the active GPS constellation.

The GPS IIFs are providing greater navigational accuracy through improvements in atomic clock technology, a more resilient signal for commercial aviation and safety-of-life applications, and a longer design life of 12 years.

"Boeing launched the first GPS satellite in 1978 and has played an integral role in the ongoing enhancement of this vital technology ever since," said Craig Cooning, Boeing vice president and general manager of Space & Intelligence Systems. "The 42 satellites that we have deployed into service to date for the U.S. Air Force have accumulated more than 500 years of on-orbit operations, and the current system continues to meet or exceed all mission requirements."

This was the first GPS IIF satellite launch of 2014. The sixth GPS IIF is at the Florida launch site undergoing preparations for a second quarter launch. The remaining six are at the Boeing Satellite Development Center in El Segundo, Calif.

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