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GPS III Press Statement – May 9, 2008

I signed an acquisition decision memorandum (ADM) today for the Global Positioning System III program. This ADM reflects extensive, cooperative work between the OSD, Air Force and industry teams. The GPS III program completed a thorough Independent Program Assessment which helped the government team focus on and address key program challenges and risks. The ADM directs the Air Force to take specific actions to mitigate program risks. The Air Force was also directed to make adjustments in order to pay fee on the program for specific program accomplishments, continuing a DoD push to award fee more carefully and on a more objective basis

The Air Force was also directed to execute the program to the existing Capability Development Document, while encouraging the program manager to consider solutions which lower cost or risk to deliver within or below budget. The program manager is directed to not adjust program scope to increase technical specifications, system requirements or system performance.

The GPS III program has further set the stage for success by using two, competitive teams to develop initial designs, to build prototypes of key components, and to test certain design features of the respective satellites.

I believe these decisions, and the technology maturation work done on GPS III, set the stage for a successful GPS III program. GPS III capability is essential for our warfighters and almost equally important to the United States and the global community. With this approval, the Air Force will soon announce a down select to a single team for final design and construction of initial GPS III satellites.