



## Los Angeles Air Force Base Media Release



**SPACE & MISSILE SYSTEMS CENTER (AFSPC)**

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### **Air Force Successfully Activates Infrared Mission Payload**

**LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE, EL SEGUNDO, CALIF.** – The infrared sensor payload on the first U.S. Air Force Space Based Infrared System geosynchronous satellite was recently activated.

Tests are now underway to calibrate and characterize the GEO-1 payload for certification and operations.

The SBIRS GEO payload design consists of both a scanning sensor and a separate, independently steerable staring sensor. These high sensitivity sensors collect and downlink infrared events in several wavelengths in order to simultaneously support multiple mission areas.

“We are tremendously proud of Team SBIRS for their superb efforts to initialize the Air Force’s newest, most capable infrared payload,” said Col. Mike Noble, Deputy Director of the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center’s Infrared Space Systems Directorate. “This is another important milestone for the SBIRS’ Air Force and industry team. Successful payload activation is a major step toward fielding the all-new GEO capabilities for the nation and joint warfighters.”

GEO-1 was launched May 7, 2011, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The spacecraft has been fully deployed and is functioning normally in geosynchronous orbit. Spacecraft bus and payload tests will continue in parallel to characterize and tune the integrated GEO system in preparation for operational acceptance and system certification next year.

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“Payload activation demonstrates GEO-1’s capability to detect infrared events from space,” said Jeff Smith, Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company SBIRS Vice President and Program Director. “We are confident success will continue as we work closely with the Air Force and our payload partner, Northrop Grumman, to complete the remaining phases of on-orbit testing with the system.”

GEO-1 will provide timely, highly accurate missile warning, missile defense, battlespace awareness and technical intelligence data to deployed warfighters, national leadership, and U.S. allies. The SBIRS system includes GEO spacecraft plus payloads hosted in highly elliptical earth orbit, and ground control and processing elements.

“We look forward to the payload calibration tests and proving the full capabilities of the GEO-1 payload,” said Dr. Steve Toner, Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems Vice President. “We are proud to be part of the SBIRS team and to contribute to the game-changing performance of this critical space program. Activation of the SBIRS payload represents the dawn of a new era in overhead persistent infrared surveillance.”

The Air Force Infrared Space Systems Directorate at the Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, is responsible for acquisition of the SBIRS program. Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, Sunnyvale, Calif., is the prime contractor responsible for program management, systems engineering and spacecraft development. Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, Calif., is the payload subcontractor and supports systems engineering and ground mission processing development. Air Force Space Command operates the SBIRS system.

***Media representatives can submit questions for response regarding this topic by sending an e-mail to [smcpa.media@losangeles.af.mil](mailto:smcpa.media@losangeles.af.mil).***

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