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Successful Global Positioning System IIF-2 Launch from Cape Canaveral AFS

LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE, El Segundo, Calif. -- The U.S. Air Force successfully launched GPS IIF-2 Space Vehicle Number (SVN) 63 carried aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta IV Medium rocket at 2:41 a.m. EDT today from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.

"I am extremely proud of the tremendous efforts that hundreds of people on the launch team have expended for today's launch. I would like to thank United Launch Alliance, Boeing, my launch vehicle team from SMC's Launch and Range Systems Directorate and a host of others for their dedication to mission success," said the GPS IIF-2 Mission Director Col. Bob Hodgkiss.

This is the second in the series of 12 GPS satellites that Boeing has on contract with the Air Force. The satellite will join the GPS constellation of 30 operational satellites on-orbit providing precise positioning, navigation and timing services to users worldwide. SVN-63 will assume plane D, slot 2A position replacing SVN-24 after nearly 20 years of service. The satellite is expected to be available for navigation users worldwide next month.

The GPS IIF satellites will provide greater navigation accuracy to users through improvements in atomic clock technology and a more robust signal for commercial aviation and safety-of-life applications, known as the third civil signal (L5). Along with new and improved signals GPS IIF will have a longer design life of 12 years providing long-term service and reduced operating costs. GPS IIF will also continue to deploy the modernized capabilities that began with the modernized GPS IIR satellites, including a more robust military signal.

"I'm extremely pleased with today's successful launch; the GPS system's overall navigational accuracy will improve as more GPS IIF space vehicles are put into service," said Col. Bernie Gruber, director of SMC's Global Positioning Systems

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Directorate. "The improved accuracy, reliability and security of the GPS system ensure that the Air Force will continue to meet its navigation and timing commitments to GPS users around the world," said Col. Gruber.