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Encapsulation milestone of second Advanced Extremely High Frequency satellite moves Air Force closer to launch

LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE, El Segundo, Calif. – Engineers at the Astrotech Space Operations facility in Titusville, Fla., completed the encapsulation procedure April 21 for the U.S. Air Force’s second Advanced Extremely High Frequency spacecraft.

The encapsulation process marks an important milestone in the satellite’s launch campaign and culminates payload and bus functional testing, propellant loading and combined spacecraft and launch vehicle interface testing. AEHF-2 is scheduled to launch May 3, 2012.

“The second AEHF spacecraft will provide greater connectivity, flexibility and control to U.S. and international partner forces,” said Col. Michael Sarchet, the Government AEHF Program Manager. “The AEHF constellation will augment and replace the venerable Milstar constellation improving on many capabilities to include 10 times greater throughput.”

AEHF is a joint service satellite communications system that will provide survivable, global, secure, protected, and jam-resistant communications for high-priority military ground, sea and air assets. The AEHF system is the follow-on to the Milstar system, augmenting, improving and expanding the Department of Defense’s MILSATCOM architecture.

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AEHF-2 was procured from Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company by the MILSATCOM Systems Directorate, part of the Air Force Space Command's Space and Missile Systems Center. The MILSATCOM Systems Directorate plans, acquires and sustains space-based global communications in support of the president, secretary of defense and combat forces. The MILSATCOM enterprise consists of satellites, terminals and control stations and provides communications for more than 16,000 air, land and sea platforms.

Media representatives can submit questions for response regarding this topic by sending an e-mail to smcpa.media@losangeles.af.mil.

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