



Los Angeles Air Force Base Media Release

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

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Release no: 12-10-01

Date: Oct. 3, 2012
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SBIRS GEO-1 Enters Dedicated Operational Test

LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE, El Segundo, Calif. –The U.S. Air Force announced Sept. 27 that the first Space Based Infrared System Geosynchronous Earth Orbit satellite and associated ground system is certified to enter dedicated operational utility evaluation and trial period operations as scheduled in preparation for use by the warfighter.

SBIRS delivers global, overhead, persistent, taskable infrared surveillance capabilities to meet 21st-century demands for early warning of missile launches, while simultaneously supporting other critical missions including missile defense, technical intelligence, and battlespace awareness.

Since its launch in May 2011, GEO-1 and its ground systems have undergone a stringent integrated operational and developmental test campaign in which stressing scenarios were injected to demonstrate the system's readiness to enter dedicated operational utility evaluation and trial period operations.

"In our final test event, we ran the system through a gauntlet that compressed nearly 10 years worth of simulated operational use into a high-intensity two month test period," said Lt. Col. Ryan Umstattd, GEO-1 certification lead. "I couldn't be happier with how well the system performed during those stressing scenarios."

As part of the operational utility evaluation, the system will enter trial period operations in which, for the first time, live GEO scanner data will be injected into the warfighters' operational networks, providing critical warning and intelligence data. The trial period will culminate with the U.S. Strategic Command certification of GEO-1 satellite and ground processing elements, anticipated later this fall when the GEO sensor and its data will be declared operationally proven and accepted.

"Bringing GEO-1 into the fight opens the door to detection and reporting of a whole new class of events for SBIRS," said Lt. Col. Chris Sullivan, director of the Combined Task Force that operates GEO-1. "We can now provide early warning on targets that were never observed before because they were either too dim or too short in duration."

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The SBIRS architecture features a mix of GEO satellites, payloads in highly elliptical earth orbit and associated ground hardware and software that provide a timely, accurate and clear infrared view of any region of interest around the globe during peacetime and all levels of conflict. The GEO satellites replace and improve upon the legacy Defense Support Program satellites, offering enhanced sensor flexibility and sensitivity to provide global, taskable, 24/7 infrared surveillance capabilities to support the warfighter.

“SBIRS GEO-1 is performing exceptionally well thus far and we look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S. Air Force and Northrop Grumman to fully certify this critical satellite for operational use,” said Steven Blackwell, Lockheed Martin’s SBIRS GEO-1 certification lead. “GEO-1, with its highly sophisticated technology, will deliver an unprecedented new infrared surveillance capability for our nation’s warfighters.”

"I am very proud of our combined team of acquirers, operators, contractors, and headquarters staff that is bringing GEO-1 into operations," said Col. Troy Brashear, SBIRS GEO-1, GEO-2, and ground division chief. "This team is at the vanguard of revolutionizing the overhead persistent infrared mission area for decades to come."

The SBIRS development team is led by the Infrared Space Systems Directorate at the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif. Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, Sunnyvale, Calif., is the SBIRS prime contractor, Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, Calif., is the payload integrator. The 14th Air Force operates the SBIRS system.

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

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