

Boeing to provide system integration and testing support for next-generation satellite network

SPRINGFIELD, Va., June 9, 2011 - The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] announced today that it has received a contract from Thales Alenia Space to provide system integration and testing support for Iridium NEXT. Iridium NEXT is the next-generation satellite constellation being designed, built and launched by Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq: IRDM). Thales Alenia is the prime contractor for Iridium NEXT.

This long-term contract, extending through 2017, allows Boeing to continue its strong partnerships with both Thales Alenia and Iridium. In July 2010, Iridium also announced that it extended its long-term relationship with Boeing for satellite network operations support for the current Iridium constellation as well as Iridium NEXT.

“Boeing looks forward to working closely with the Thales Alenia team on the Iridium NEXT program,” said Sparky Olsen, director of Mission Operations for Boeing. “This partnership ensures the continued high-quality performance that the Iridium network delivers, as well as a seamless transition to Iridium NEXT in the coming years.”

The Iridium satellite network is the world’s farthest-reaching communications network and the largest commercial satellite constellation in existence today. Iridium is the only provider of truly global voice and data communications services. Boeing has maintained the software and managed Iridium satellite operations for more than 10 years. Iridium NEXT will seamlessly transition Iridium customers to the benefits of the company’s planned enhanced satellite services and capabilities.

Under this new contract, Boeing will work with Thales Alenia to provide support for the system integration and testing of the Iridium NEXT satellites. Boeing’s Mission Operations group, out of its Chandler, Ariz., and Leesburg, Va., locations, will support this program.

“The Thales Alenia Space Project Team worked alongside Boeing’s Mission Operations during more than two years when competing to win the Iridium NEXT program,” said Philippe Aucher, program director, Iridium NEXT, Thales Alenia Space. “There was absolutely no questioning of the incredible technical achievement, high professionalism, and total commitment of Boeing’s Mission Operations team operating Iridium Block 1. Having Boeing’s Mission Operations as part of the Thales Alenia Space team is essential to secure the system integration and test for our customer’s program, and we are proud to welcome them as a key member of our industrial team.”

“Iridium can deliver and extend its unique network strengths only by having the very best industry team in place to build and support Iridium NEXT,” said Scott Smith, executive vice president, Satellite Development and Operations, Iridium. “Building on this long-standing and successful working relationship with Boeing is very important to Iridium and its growing customer base.”

A unit of The Boeing Company, [Boeing Defense, Space & Security](#) is one of the world's largest defense, space and security businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions, and the world’s largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Defense, Space & Security is a \$32 billion business with 65,000 employees worldwide. Follow us on Twitter: [@BoeingDefense](#).