



Iridium Announces Target Launch Date for the Iridium-6/GRACE-FO Mission

MCLEAN, Va., April 09, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (NASDAQ:IRDM) announced today that the Iridium-6/GRACE-FO rideshare mission, the sixth Iridium® NEXT launch overall, has been targeted for launch by SpaceX from Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB) in California for May 19, 2018 at approximately 1:03 PM PDT (20:03 UTC). An exact instantaneous launch window time will be available closer to launch. The second of four Iridium launches planned for 2018, this mission will deliver five Iridium NEXT satellites to orbit, alongside the twin satellites for the NASA/German Research Center for Geosciences (GFZ) Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment Follow-On (GRACE-FO) mission. Collaboratively chosen by all parties and considering range availability, this launch date maintains scheduled completion of the Iridium NEXT manifest in 2018.

This unique "rideshare" launch, will first deploy the twin GRACE-FO spacecraft, after which the Falcon 9 second stage will continue onward to the deployment orbit for the five Iridium NEXT satellites. Upon completion, the Iridium-6/GRACE-FO mission will increase the total number of Iridium NEXT satellites in space to 55, leaving just two launches, of 10 satellites each, remaining. Iridium NEXT satellites are scheduled to begin shipping to the launch site this week while the twin GRACE-FO spacecraft are already onsite at the VAFB Harris Corporation facility, and have been stacked, attached to their dispenser and are preparing for transfer to the SpaceX launch complex.

For this mission, all five Iridium NEXT satellites will be delivered to orbital plane six. The Iridium network is comprised of six polar orbiting planes, each containing 11 operational crosslinked satellites, for a total of 66 satellites in the active constellation. The 2018 Iridium NEXT launch series will bring a total of 35 new satellites to space, completing the constellation of 66 operational satellites and 9 in-orbit spares. In total, 81 new satellites are being built, with the six remaining satellites serving as ground spares.

Iridium NEXT is the company's \$3 billion, next-generation, mobile, global satellite network scheduled for completion in 2018. Iridium NEXT will replace the company's existing global constellation in one of the largest technology upgrades ever completed in space. It represents the evolution of critical communications infrastructure that governments and organizations worldwide rely on to drive business, enable connectivity, empower disaster relief efforts and more.

For more information about Iridium NEXT, please visit www.IridiumNEXT.com

About Iridium Communications Inc.

Iridium is the only mobile voice and data satellite communications network that spans the entire globe. Iridium enables connections between people, organizations and assets to and from anywhere, in real time. Together with its ecosystem of partner companies, Iridium delivers an innovative and rich portfolio of reliable solutions for markets that require truly global communications. The company has a major development program underway for its next-generation network — Iridium NEXT. Iridium Communications Inc. is headquartered in McLean, Va., U.S.A., and its common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the ticker symbol IRDM. For more information about Iridium products, services and partner solutions, visit www.iridium.com.

Forward Looking Statements

Statements in this press release that are not purely historical facts may constitute forward-looking statements

as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The Company has based these statements on its current expectations and the information currently available to us. Forward-looking statements in this press release include statements regarding the timing for deployment of the Iridium NEXT constellation. Forward-looking statements can be identified by the words "anticipates," "may," "can," "believes," "expects," "projects," "intends," "likely," "will," "to be" and other expressions that are predictions or indicate future events, trends or prospects. These forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of Iridium to differ materially from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, uncertainties regarding potential delays in the Iridium NEXT deployment and the company's ability to maintain the health, capacity and content of its satellite constellation, as well as general industry and economic conditions, and competitive, legal, governmental and technological factors. Other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements include those factors listed under the caption "Risk Factors" in the Company's Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on February 22, 2018, as well as other filings Iridium makes with the SEC from time to time. There is no assurance that Iridium's expectations will be realized. If one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or if Iridium's underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those expected, estimated or projected. Iridium's forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this press release, and Iridium undertakes no obligation to update forward-looking statements.

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