



April 3, 2018

Fifth Set of Iridium® NEXT Satellites Begin Pre-Operational Testing

MCLEAN, Va., April 03, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications announced today that the fifth set of 10 Iridium NEXT satellites, launched Friday by SpaceX, are functioning nominally and have begun the testing and validation process. Not only did this fifth launch increase the total number of Iridium NEXT satellites in space to 50, but it was also the second Iridium NEXT launch to use a flight-proven Falcon 9 rocket.

"Once testing is complete, we will be just 25 Iridium NEXT satellites shy of completing this historic tech refresh. It's inspiring to think about how we're doing this for a second time and no one else has accomplished a feat of this magnitude in Space even once." said Scott Smith, chief operating officer at Iridium. "I'm beyond proud of our team at the Satellite Network Operations Center, which has been operating like a well-oiled machine. Tests and diagnostics began just minutes after the new satellites deployed, and all systems are functioning nominally."

The Iridium constellation is comprised of six polar orbiting planes, each containing 11 operational crosslinked satellites, for a total of 66 satellites in the active constellation. This unique architecture creates a web of coverage around the earth, enabling Iridium to provide real-time communications over the oceans and from even the most remote locations. Three more Iridium NEXT launches are scheduled for 2018, to bring Iridium's total to 75 new satellites in orbit, including nine spares.

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.

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