



Iridium Announces Date for First Iridium NEXT Launch

MCLEAN, Va., Dec. 01, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (NASDAQ:IRDM) announced today the date for the first launch of its next-generation global satellite constellation, Iridium NEXT. Iridium will be launching on SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket on December 16, 2016 at 12:36 p.m. PST. Launching from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, the Falcon 9 rocket will deliver 10 Iridium NEXT satellites into low-earth orbit.

This launch is contingent upon the FAA's approval of SpaceX's return to flight following the anomaly that occurred on September 1, 2016 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. The investigation has been conducted with FAA oversight. Iridium expects to be SpaceX's first return to flight launch customer.

"We're excited to launch the first batch of our new satellite constellation. We have remained confident in SpaceX's ability as a launch partner throughout the Falcon 9 investigation," said Matt Desch, chief executive officer at Iridium. "We are grateful for their transparency and hard work to plan for their return to flight. We are looking forward to the inaugural launch of Iridium NEXT, and what will begin a new chapter in our history."

Iridium NEXT will replace the world's largest commercial satellite network of low-earth orbit satellites in what will be one of the largest "tech upgrades" in history. Iridium has partnered with Thales Alenia Space for the manufacturing, assembly and testing of 81 Iridium NEXT satellites, at least 70 of which will be launched by SpaceX. The process of replacing the satellites one-by-one in a constellation of this size and scale has never been completed before.

"We are looking forward to return to flight with the first Iridium NEXT launch," said Gwynne Shotwell, president and chief operating officer of SpaceX. "Iridium has been a great partner for nearly a decade, and we appreciate their working with us to put their first 10 Iridium NEXT satellites into orbit."

Iridium NEXT will enable the development of new and innovative products and solutions across Iridium's vast partner ecosystem. Additionally, Iridium CertusSM, Iridium's next-generation multi-service communications platform enabled by Iridium NEXT, will deliver faster speeds and higher throughputs across multiple industry verticals. A service of this quality and value is unprecedented in the industry, and is poised to disrupt the current market status quo. Currently, the service is set to be commercially available in 2017 and is undergoing testing on Iridium's existing network.

Iridium's primary launch campaign consists of seven SpaceX Falcon 9 launches, deploying ten Iridium NEXT satellites at a time. These 70 Iridium NEXT satellites are scheduled to be deployed by early 2018. For more information about Iridium NEXT, please visit www.iridium.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

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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 presentation include statements regarding the timing for deployment, development and capabilities of the Iridium NEXT constellation and services to be offered over the constellation, including Iridium Certus. 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, the development and functionality of Iridium NEXT and related services, including Iridium Certus, 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, 2015, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on February 25, 2016, 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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