



First Flight Main Mission Antennas Completed for Iridium NEXT Satellites

MCLEAN, Va., July 21, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq:IRDM) today announced the completion of the first five flight main mission antennas (MMAs) for the Iridium NEXT constellation. A key component of each new satellite, the antennas are sophisticated pieces of equipment. The antennas manage the reception and transmission of data to and from various Iridium® customer devices. Each MMA is built to exacting specifications, using the lowest possible amount of power with the highest possible throughput to transmit and receive data.

"The main mission antennas are a critical component of each satellite, and meeting this milestone is a huge step forward for the constellation build," stated Scott Smith, Chief Operating Officer, Iridium Communications Inc. "We're working side-by-side with the team from Thales Alenia Space to ensure these are built to our precise specifications and thoroughly tested to ensure long-term reliability. We're extremely pleased with the progress to date."

The antennas were designed by Thales Alenia Space and built with components sourced from suppliers in the United States and Europe. With these initial antennas finished, the assembly will now move into high volume production. Thales will build a total of 81 MMAs, one for each satellite in the Iridium NEXT constellation, including in-orbit and ground spares. Each antenna is comprised of an antenna control unit and a beamforming network, as well as 168 transmit and receive modules. Once mounted on a satellite and in orbit, the 48 spot beams from each antenna will collectively cover an area roughly the size of the United States.

"This milestone represents a crucial step in building these 81 satellites and brings us closer to the launch of the Iridium NEXT constellation," stated Denis Allard, VP Iridium NEXT Project for Thales Alenia Space. "As we move forward with the build, we will now begin extensive testing of each MMA to ensure reliability."

The Iridium NEXT satellite network will consist of 66 in-orbit satellites, and six in-orbit spares. The constellation will begin launching in 2015 and when fully operational in 2017 will offer greater bandwidth and data speeds. It will include a hosted payload for AireonSM, the first truly global aircraft tracking and surveillance capability, extending ADS-B coverage and benefits to every flight path across the planet. The Iridium NEXT satellite network will also serve as a platform for the company's Iridium PRIMESM offering, a turnkey solution for hosted payloads that will offer cost-effective access to space for a variety of new government, civil and international customers.

For more information on Iridium NEXT, go to 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 development of the Iridium NEXT constellation; expected Iridium NEXT deployment and launch schedule; expected Iridium NEXT functionality; and the development and functionality of Aireon and Iridium PRIME satellites. 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 overall Iridium NEXT development and functionality, potential delays in the Iridium NEXT development and deployment, the development of and market for Aireon and the Iridium PRIME hosted payloads 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-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2014, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("the SEC") on May 1, 2014, 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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