



Iridium Completes System Critical Design Review for Iridium NEXT

MCLEAN, Va., Oct. 16, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Iridium Communications Inc. (Nasdaq:IRDM) today announced that it has successfully completed a Critical Design Review (CDR) of the complete Iridium NEXT satellite network system, demonstrating its design is valid and on schedule for first launch in early 2015. The review represents an important transition from the network design to the fabrication and testing phase of Iridium's next-generation constellation.

The Iridium NEXT satellite network will offer substantially greater bandwidth, improved data speeds, more flexible bandwidth allocation and global coverage, enabling Iridium and its vast ecosystem of partners to support more powerful new devices and applications with enhanced services to meet the changing business needs of its customers. It will also serve as a platform for the company's newly announced Iridium PRIMESM offering, a turnkey solution for hosted payloads which will provide all elements of a successful hosted payload mission at an estimated cost savings of 50% or more compared to current stand-alone solutions.

"We're very proud of the successful completion of the CDR phase under the direction of our prime contractor Thales Alenia Space," stated Scott Smith, Iridium's Chief Operating Officer. "The entire Iridium NEXT Mission Team working on this program represents the best and the brightest in the industry, and collectively we strive to consistently meet the highest standards of design, engineering and innovation within the timelines of the Iridium NEXT program. Completing the CDR phase establishes that all components of the satellites will properly function as designed in the dynamic environment of the new constellation, keeping the Iridium NEXT program schedule on track and on budget."

Thales Alenia Space (www.thalesaleniaspace.com) is leading the design and construction of the satellites for the Iridium NEXT constellation and will partner with Iridium to provide and produce a new satellite bus for Iridium PRIME, maintaining the inter-satellite crosslink functionality and the ability to fly within the Iridium NEXT constellation. In addition, the companies will work together to develop a Hosted Payload Controller for the Iridium PRIME bus to ensure independence and diversity of missions on Iridium PRIME satellites. Customers with compatible missions will be able to share the platform-minimizing costs and leverage the company's investment in Iridium NEXT.

"Thales Alenia Space is proud to work with Iridium on the largest satellite constellation in the history of the industry," stated Nathalie Smirnov, EVP Telecommunication, Thales Alenia Space. "With Iridium NEXT and Iridium PRIME satellites, this constellation will be ready to offer customers groundbreaking choice and flexibility for their technology solutions and hosted payloads."

By completing the CDR phase of the Iridium NEXT program, the next key milestone is the Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP) Readiness Review, scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2014. The review signals the completion of flight hardware design and qualification activities, and it will demonstrate that the processes and procedures, equipment, and personnel are ready for the start of satellite production.

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 ever-expanding 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 presentation include statements regarding the development of and transition to the Iridium NEXT constellation; features of the Iridium NEXT system; the Iridium NEXT deployment schedule; and the development, capabilities and cost of 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 costs, potential delays in the Iridium NEXT deployment, levels of demand for mobile satellite services (MSS), the development of and market for 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-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("the SEC") on March 5, 2013, and the Company's Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2013, filed with the SEC on August 1, 2013, 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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