GPS T·R·A·C·K·E·R

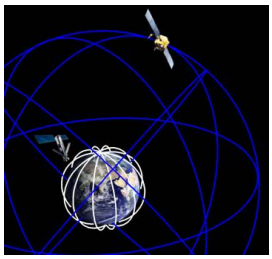
Information for Policymakers from the National Coordination Office for Space-Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT)

April 2010

Next Generation GPS Operational Control Segment (OCX) Contract Awarded

Raytheon Company was awarded a 73 month OCX development contract on February 25. The contract will include development and installation of hardware and software at GPS control stations at Schriever Air Force Base in Colorado and Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, deployment of advanced monitor stations at remote sites and initial contractor support with sustainment options for five years. OCX will replace the current GPS Operational Control System, maintaining backwards compatibility with the Block IIR and IIR-M constellation satellites, providing command and control of the new GPS IIF and GPS III families of satellites, and enabling new modernized civil signal capabilities.

High Integrity GPS Program in FY 2011 Budget



The President's FY11 budget request includes $40.9 million for the High Integrity GPS program (HIGPS, also known as iGPS). The program, part of the Navy's RDT&E budget for Common Picture Advanced Technology (Program Element 0603235N), is designed to demonstrate the capability to use Iridium satellites to enhance current GPS navigation and timing capabilities. House and Senate appropriators have disagreed on HIGPS funding in the past, with the House zeroing it out last year but the Senate restoring full funding at $59.1 million. To learn more about the FY11 request for HIGPS and other GPS-related programs, visit http://pnt.gov/congress.

DOT Seeks Public Comments on GPS Satellite Glitch

The Air Force is working to resolve a technical problem with a GPS satellite (designated SVN-49) launched last year. SVN-49 has a unique signal that may result in degraded performance for some GPS user equipment. It is currently set in an "unusable" state to prevent any adverse effects on users. The Department of Transportation, as the lead civil GPS agency, has issued a Federal Register notice seeking public comment from user equipment manufacturers on nine possible options for dealing with the anomaly. Written comments are due May 28, 2010. For additional information, see Docket RITA-2010-0002 at www.regulations.gov.

Application Spotlight: Disaster Relief & Mitigation

GPS is playing a vital role with the disaster relief efforts in Haiti and Chile. Search and rescue teams are using GPS, geographic information systems, and remote sensing technology to facilitate operations and assess damage. GPS technology is also helping scientists anticipate future earthquakes by measuring how geological strain builds up over time.

GPS also plays an important role in tsunami warning systems. NOAA's network of 39 Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami (DART) detection buoys use GPS to pinpoint the location of tsunami waves and report them to the warning centers. The DART system played a vital role in forecasting tsunamis across the Pacific region after the recent Chilean earthquake.

The modernization of GPS will further facilitate disaster relief and mitigation efforts. The addition of new civil signals will increase accuracy and reliability worldwide, leading to better disaster planning and faster recovery for victims of global tragedies.

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