

Ball Aerospace Celebrates Successful First Year Since QuikSCAT Commissioned; 98.9% of Wind Data Processed

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A year ago, Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. commissioned the QuikSCAT satellite to the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC). QuikSCAT, the first commercial satellite built by Ball Aerospace from its Ball Commercial Platform (BCP) 2000 bus product line, has performed exceptionally throughout its first year of operation.

According to information released last week by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and NOAA, of the 366 days of data collection since QuikSCAT was commissioned July 19, 1999, 361.9 days' worth of wind data has been processed. This is approximately 98.9 percent of all possible data.

"QuikSCAT's fantastic success demonstrates the viability of our BCP 2000 product line," said David L. Taylor, vice president of Ball Aerospace's Commercial Space Operations strategic business unit. "We are carving a distinctive niche in the marketplace as a company that can build and deliver reliable spacecraft rapidly and within cost. With our build of NASA's BCP 2000 ICESat and EarthWatch Inc.'s Quickbirds 1 and 2 BCP 2000 spacecraft, we are looking forward to an ongoing relationship providing commercial spacecraft for government and industry."

QuikSCAT, built by Ball Aerospace in approximately 11 months -- an industry record for a spacecraft of this size -- was also the first launch of a satellite using NASA's Rapid Spacecraft Acquisition (RSA) procurement process to reduce the time, and thus the cost, traditionally necessary to acquire satellite systems.

Ball Aerospace provided the QuikSCAT spacecraft bus, launch interface systems, system integration, test and launch support. The company is also performing two years of mission operations with the University of Colorado's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics as subcontractor. Mission operations were automated earlier this year.

QuikSCAT, a 1,910-pound (fueled) satellite, carries a 450-pound payload -- the SeaWinds scatterometer built by JPL. In a near-polar orbit with a ground speed of 6.6 km (4 miles) per second, QuikSCAT circles the Earth every 100 minutes at a distance of 800 km (500 miles). The scatterometer records sea-surface wind speed and direction data for global climate research, collecting approximately 400,000 measurements daily. QuikSCAT is managed by JPL for NASA's Earth Science Enterprise, and is part of a long-term, coordinated research effort to study the total Earth system and the effects of natural and human-induced changes in the environment.

Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. provides imaging and communications products for commercial and government customers worldwide and is a subsidiary of Ball Corporation, a Fortune 500 company which had sales of \$3.6 billion in 1999.

SOURCE: Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.

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