Ball News Releases

Ball Aerospace Tests NASA's Landsat Operational Land Imager in Stray Light Test Facility

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Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. has successfully completed stray light testing of the Operational Land Imager (OLI) telescope assembly for NASA's Landsat Data Continuity Mission.

(Photo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20100209/LA51698)

The first of its kind stray light test was conducted at Ball's new Stray Light Test Facility (SLTF) in Boulder, Colorado. The OLI instrument will provide 15-meter (49ft.) panchromatic and 30m multi-spectral earth-imaging spatial-resolution capability for the eighth mission in the Landsat satellite series. Control of stray light is critical to the quality of the OLI data product, requiring a level of testing no other earth remote sensing instrument of this caliber has undergone. The test included Point Source Rejection Ratio scans obtained over a wide range of angles and for four telescope configurations: open earth-view port, open and closed solar cal port and aperture shutter closed. Demonstrating sensitivity over 10 orders of magnitude, the quality and repeatability of the data proved that the OLI telescope has excellent margin on all on-orbit stray light requirements.

Ball's new SLTF is a Class 5 clean room designed to eliminate undesired sources of background light and to emphasize superior contamination control of the test environment. The double cylindrical chamber reflects the specular light away from the instrument under test. As the facility interior is nearly all black, illumination sources can be either a solar simulator or discrete laser wavelengths collimated into an 18-inch diameter beam. The facility is designed to test a wide variety of instruments up to approximately 2 meters per side and weighing up to 1,100 pounds over a wide range of elevation and azimuth angles.

"The universal value of the Landsat program is inestimable," said David L. Taylor, president and CEO of Ball Aerospace. "Testing of OLI in Ball's stray light facility brings us closer to delivering an instrument that will continue NASA's longest continuous imagery data record of our planet."

The Landsat program is a series of Earth-observing satellite missions jointly managed by NASA and the U.S. Geological Survey. For more than 36 years, Landsat satellites have continuously and consistently collected images of Earth, creating a historical archive unmatched in quality, detail, coverage and length. The Ball Aerospace OLI instrument, slated to launch in late 2012, includes a 185km swath allowing the entire globe to be imaged every 16 days. The multispectral imagery is gathered for applications that include agricultural monitoring, natural resource management, land-use planning and climate science.

Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp. supports critical missions of important national agencies such as the Department of Defense, NASA, NOAA and other U.S. government and commercial entities. The company develops and manufactures spacecraft, advanced instruments and sensors, components, data exploitation systems and RF solutions for strategic, tactical and scientific applications. For more information visit www.ballaerospace.com.

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Forward-Looking Statements

This release contains "forward-looking" statements concerning future events and financial performance. Words such as "expects," "anticipates," "estimates" and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Such statements are subject to risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied. The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Key risks and uncertainties are summarized in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including Exhibit 99.2 in our Form 10-K, which are available at our Web site and at www.sec.gov. Factors that might affect our packaging segments include fluctuation in product demand and preferences; availability and cost of raw materials; competitive packaging availability, pricing and substitution; changes in climate and weather; crop yields; competitive activity; failure to achieve anticipated productivity improvements or production cost reductions; mandatory deposit or other restrictive packaging laws; changes in major customer or supplier contracts or loss of a major customer or supplier; and changes in foreign exchange rates or tax rates. Factors that might affect our aerospace segment include: funding, authorization, availability and returns of government and commercial contracts; and delays, extensions and technical uncertainties affecting segment contracts. Factors that might affect the company as a whole include those listed plus: accounting changes; changes in senior management; the current global recession and its effects on liquidity, credit risk, asset values and the economy; successful or unsuccessful acquisitions, joint ventures or divestitures; integration of recently acquired businesses; regulatory action or laws including tax, environmental, health and workplace safety, including in respect of climate change, or chemicals or substances used in raw materials or in the manufacturing process; governmental investigations; technological developments and innovations; goodwill impairment; antitrust, patent and other litigation; strikes; labor cost changes; rates of return projected and earned on assets of the company's defined benefit retirement plans; pension changes; reduced cash flow; interest rates

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First Call Analyst:
FCMN Contact: rbrown@ball.com

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SOURCE: Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.

CONTACT: Roz Brown of Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp.,
+1-303-533-6059, rbrown@ball.com

Web Site: http://www.ballaerospace.com/
