



United States Strategic Command

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STRATCOM/AFSPC to improve global GPS coverage

(Omaha, Neb) - The United States Strategic Command and Air Force Space Command have initiated an effort that will improve global coverage for users of the Global Positioning System (GPS) constellation.

The need to support U.S. and allied military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, where terrain in geographically challenging areas can degrade complete coverage of GPS signals, drove a look for ways to improve signal coverage.

The United States Strategic Command is charged with the responsibility for providing and maintaining space capabilities to civil, commercial and military users world-wide. As such, Commander, USSTRATCOM approved an Air Force-developed approach that benefits not only military operations but all GPS users by taking advantage of the largest on-orbit GPS constellation in its history.

The current GPS constellation will be optimized to provide enhanced capability for all GPS users and provide better support to military forces operating in Afghanistan. Essentially, this plan will take advantage of today's constellation size and reposition satellites to improve coverage.

The existing constellation replenishment strategy positions new GPS satellites close to older satellites. This strategy protects against possible failing satellite vehicles. The current strength of the constellation will allow the constellation to be spread out and improve GPS access worldwide.

The initiative will take up to 24 months to fully implement as satellites are repositioned within the constellation based on constellation health. The beneficial impact to all GPS users, including civilian users, will be slowly realized during that time period. Over the next two years, the number of GPS satellites in view from any point on earth will increase, potentially increasing accuracy of GPS receivers.

The STRATCOM and AFSPC team seeks to continually enhance GPS capability and is committed to meeting and exceeding civilian and military user requirements for worldwide, 24/7, positioning, navigation, and timing service.

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