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NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center Deploys FutureFLEX Air-blown Fiber For Constellation Program's Next Generation Spacecraft Launches

Research Triangle Park, NC, May 14, 2008 — Sumitomo Electric Lightwave today announced the installation of the FutureFLEX Air-blown Fiber LAN infrastructure throughout major facilities at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center. The use of the Air-blown Fiber system allows the Center to prepare its network for quick and easy implementation of high-bandwidth emerging technologies and other functions for NASA's Constellation Program. The continued use of the Air-blown Fiber technology follows the successful deployment of the FutureFLEX® Air-blown Fiber® system installed at the Kennedy Space Center's Launch Pad A, from which the Final Inspection Team for space shuttle Discovery on mission STS-120 had, for the first time, transmitted instant access digital images to the launch managers at the Launch Control Center.

To achieve the goal of developing the most technologically advanced IT network for speed and delivery of communications technologies, new launch processing systems, and use of bandwidth-rich video to support the Constellation Program's current and future requirements, NASA engineers are positioning empty blown fiber tubes throughout various facilities at Kennedy Space Center, including the Launch Control Center, Vehicle Assembly Building, and the newly remodeled manufacturing facility.

"Our objective at Kennedy Space Center is to build an on-demand network that is ready for anything, including the quick implementation of bandwidth intensive video technologies and new launch systems, and a quick response time for getting crucial projects completed on time and on budget for the Constellation Space Exploration Program," comments Mathew K. Smisor, NASA's telecom systems engineer. "With air blown fiber technology, we can make network expansions, upgrades, and reconfigurations in minutes or hours rather than the days or weeks associated with a traditional fiber optic infrastructure, while having real-time control of bandwidth and network capacity."

"Many of our projects—such as the immediate transmission via fiber of digital images showing the status of ice buildup on the space shuttle Discovery—resolve costly delays and life and death situations if it's a manned spacecraft," explains Outside Plant Engineer, Lawrence Wages. "By adopting an air-blown fiber infrastructure, we can quickly and easily make necessary network reconfigurations and changes at nearly a moment's notice and at a fraction of the cost of a conventional fiber optic system, providing us with the means to be more responsive to mission critical situations while being fiscally responsible with budget dollars."

As NASA's technology and network requirements are continually defined, engineers will have the ability to quickly and easily blow in and blow out the specific amount and type of fiber needed within the empty tube structure to upgrade, reconfigure, or expand the network, even in secure and limited access areas, with just the amount of bandwidth required to accomplish their various network projects. With a traditional fiber optic infrastructure, fiber optic cable is pulled, requiring investment of today's capital for the installation of a predetermined amount and type of fiber based upon the forecast of what technology and network needs might be over a five to six year period. Rather than limit bandwidth capacity, the Air-blown Fiber technology provides NASA with immediate control of bandwidth, no disruption to operations eliminating network downtime, a pay-as-you go approach to budgeting, and the flexibility to quickly meet necessary network changes—essential for NASA's vision for the technologically advanced Constellation Program, the new chapter in space exploration.

The FutureFLEX Air-blown Fiber infrastructure has also been deployed at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards, California since 2005, serving as its wireless infrastructure and backbone for the high-speed sharing of information among its research facilities and new program enhancements.

About Sumitomo Electric Lightwave and FutureFLEX® Air-Blown Fiber® System:

Sumitomo Electric Lightwave, located in Research Triangle Park, NC, is dedicated to the development and manufacturing of optical fiber cable, network products, fusion splicers, and FTTP solutions.

Representative FutureFLEX customers include: ESPN, Pentagon, Johns Hopkins University, Mayo Clinic, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Arizona Cardinals Stadium, Homeland Security, ConocoPhillips, Nissan and others. For additional information, please visit www.sumitomoelectric.com and www.futureflex.com or call 800-358-7378.

About NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center:

The John F. Kennedy Space Center, located near Orlando, Florida, has helped set the stage for America's adventure into space for more than four decades. The spaceport has served as the departure gate for every American manned mission and hundred of advanced scientific spacecraft. From the early days of Project Mercury to the space shuttle and International Space Station, from the Hubble Space Telescope to the Mars Exploration Rovers, the center enjoys a rich heritage in its vital role as NASA's processing and launch center. For more information, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/home/index.html>.

About Dryden Flight Research Center

NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, located in Edwards, California, advances technology and science through flight. The center performs flight research and technology integration to revolutionize aviation and pioneer aerospace technology, validates space exploration concepts, and conducts airborne remote sensing and science missions. Dryden also supports operations of the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station -- for NASA and the nation. For more information, visit <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/dryden/home/index.html>.

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