

# FLUX News

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## ► First 10 Iridium NEXT satellites launched

The first 10 satellites for Iridium's NEXT-Generation mobile voice and data relay network have successfully launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2017. This launch of Iridium NEXT communications satellites is the first of at least 80 Iridium NEXT satellites to be launched through to early 2018, primarily in batches of 10 at a time.

After three months of tests to check the health and function of spacecraft systems, ground and inter-satellite communications links, and tack-on instruments to track global air and maritime traffic in polar orbit 625 km above Earth, the NEXT satellites will maneuver into the operational Iridium constellation at an altitude of 780 km, replacing the company's 66 existing satellites one-by-one.

This launch is a big step for Iridium, which is spending \$3 billion on the new NEXT satellite program. Iridium's current satellite network is aging - launched between 1997 and 2002 - and needs an upgrade.

Flux has supplied more than 10.000 components to the Iridium NEXT constellation through Flux's longstanding cooperation with satellite-builder Thales Alenia Space in France.

