

NASA procurement of satellites for other agencies

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From Space News This Week for Nov. 26, 2007. Interesting that TDRSS is still mostly serving Pentagon needs. Presumably that's at least for the four LACROSSEes now in orbit, maybe FIA radar in the future.

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REPLACEMENT SATELLITES TOP THE LIST OF UPCOMING NASA DEALS By BRIAN BERGER, WASHINGTON

The biggest acquisitions NASA has on tap for 2008 are satellite systems being procured largely on behalf of other U.S. government agencies, a circumstance industry analysts attribute in part to the space agency having most of its money already tied up in operations and existing development contracts.

In December, NASA expects to award the prime contract for the next series of Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS) spacecraft. While NASA uses the satellites to communicate with the space shuttle and international space station, most of their bandwidth is devoted to the Pentagon, which covers the lion's share of TDRSS operations costs and is driving many of the system's requirements, some of them classified.

The competition pits incumbent Boeing Satellite Systems of El Segundo, Calif., against Northrop Grumman Space Technology of Redondo Beach, Calif., which built the first seven TDRSS craft and would like to add the program back to its portfolio. At stake is a firm fixed-price contract for at least two satellites, TDRSS K and L, with options to buy two more. NASA wants the first spacecraft ready to launch before the end of 2012.