

GPS System Could Start Failing by Next Year

May 20 2009, by John Messina



(PhysOrg.com) -- A federal watchdog agency has warned the U.S. Congress that the GPS system could start failing in 2010 and beyond. Due to delays in launching replacement satellites and other circumstances, the GPS systems risk the possibility of blackouts and failures starting next year.

As old satellites start to fail in 2010, the overall GPS constellation will fall below the number of satellites required to provide the level of GPS service that the U.S. government commits to. This will come to reality if the Air Force does not meet their schedule for the deployment of GPS IIIA satellites.



The latest GPS <u>satellite</u> program is already \$870 million over budget and there are significant technical problems that could still threaten its delivery schedule.

There are about 30 GPS satellites that are in <u>orbit</u> now. The new satellites in the IIF block are three years late, and the first of them won't be launched until November at the earliest. Other factors such as the lack of a single authority responsible for GPS, have contributed also to the delays.

A GAO (Government Accountability Office) report recommends that the Department of Defense appoint a single authority to direct all development of GPS systems on the ground and in space.

As we all know the GPS is widely used by business and consumers in many modern automobiles that show or even tell drivers where they are and remind them when and where to turn to get where they're going. Owners of the Apple <u>3G iPhone</u> use the GPS service to call up a map on the screen and see exactly where they are.

The <u>Global Positioning System</u> (GPS) is reliable, and free to the public and is taken for granted, but don't throw away those maps from the glove compartment just yet, since it's uncertain for how long the U.S. government can continue to deliver.

© 2009 PhysOrg.com

Citation: GPS System Could Start Failing by Next Year (2009, May 20) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <u>https://phys.org/news/2009-05-gps-year.html</u>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private



study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.