

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Recognition Growing for Value of Small Satellites

**Sparks, Nevada – April 7, 2009** - Small, low cost, satellites that can be rapidly fielded to augment traditional large national security satellites continue to gain attention in a time of constrained military budgets. As highlighted in a recent article in Aviation Week and Space Technology (“Smallsats Could get Boost in Global Financial Crisis”, March 29, 2009), small satellites are less complex to build and if the Pentagon and Intelligence agencies begin to embrace their use, the current large satellite contractors will be joined by smaller, leaner companies, such as Sierra Nevada Corporation, capable of developing and launching small, high performance satellites.

Sierra Nevada Space Systems built the highly successful TacSat-2 optical imaging satellite for the Air Force Research Labs for a total cost of development and launch of about \$65M. Although not as capable as National imaging satellites in terms of resolution and area coverage, it provided images at under 1m resolution direct to troops in the field using a space qualified version of a standard datalink currently used to downlink images and video from Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs). The power of such a system can be realized by fielding as few as a dozen of these smaller satellites which could provide multiple passes per day over any position in the world, and provide the images collected direct to multiple theaters. By building many copies of the same satellite, they can be fielded very quickly and the cost savings are substantial.

As an example, Sierra Nevada is currently building 18 satellites for a commercial satellite communications company at a total cost including development and recurring build of \$117M, or only \$6.5M per satellite. In addition, all 18 satellites are being built and launched in 36 months. Considering National satellite developments can take 10 years and cost in the billions of dollars, it makes tremendous sense to consider augmenting these limited high value assets with dozens of smaller satellites that can provide the persistence, global coverage, and flexibility desired by troops on the ground. Sierra Nevada Space Systems is currently working with the Air Force Research Labs on even faster development and fielding of satellites at lower cost using modular design techniques and a plug and play architecture on the recently awarded [Multi-Mission Space Vehicle \(MMSV\) contract](#).

### About Sierra Nevada Corporation

Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC) is known for its rapid, innovative, and agile technology solutions in electronics, aerospace, avionics, space, propulsion, micro-satellite, aircraft and communications systems for both the private and public sectors. Founded in 1963, SNC’s seven unique business areas employ more than 1600 people in 31 different locations in 20 states – all of whom are dedicated to providing leading-edge solutions to SNC’s dynamic customer base.

Over its 45 year history, SNC has remained focused on providing its customers the very best in diversified technologies to meet their needs and has a strong and proven track record of success. SNC has grown into one of the Top Woman-Owned Federal Contractors in the United States while maintaining its reputation for innovation and agility. The company continues to focus its growth on the commercial sector through internal advancements and outside acquisitions, including the emerging markets of telemedicine, nanotechnology, energy and net-centric operations. For more information on SNC visit [www.sncorp.com](http://www.sncorp.com)

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