

**THE WHITE HOUSE**

**Office of the Press Secretary**

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**Contact: Rick Borchelt  
(202) 456-6020**

**PRESIDENT OPENS DOOR TO COMMERCIAL GPS MARKETS;  
MOVE COULD ADD 100,000 NEW JOBS TO ECONOMY BY YEAR 2000**

**WASHINGTON** – President Clinton today approved new guidelines for management and use of the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS), opening the door for rapid growth in a burgeoning civil and commercial GPS market that could add 100,000 jobs to the U.S. economy and grow from \$2 billion to \$8 billion in annual sales by the year 2000.

"The same technology that helped our troops succeed in Desert Storm will bring us safer air travel throughout the world, improved transportation on our roads and highways and faster response to emergencies by rescue vehicles. And it will help America's industries lead the world," President Clinton said.

"Today's announcement means the creation of an entirely new, multi-billion-dollar commercial industry and thousands of new high-technology U.S. jobs, mainly in California," said Vice President Gore in releasing the new Administration policy at a White House briefing. "It opens the door to peaceful international civil, commercial and scientific use of the GPS, and solidifies U.S. industries' lead in this important technology."

California is the state where most of the GPS technology is produced. Out of the 100,000 jobs expected to be created nationwide in the next five years, an estimated 50,000 will be based in California.

GPS technology makes it possible for users to determine their position and navigate anywhere in the world. GPS is increasingly vital to a wide range of civilian and commercial applications ranging from backpacking and pleasure boating to car navigation, emergency rescue, maritime shipping and international air traffic management. The growing demand from civil, commercial, and scientific users has generated a U.S. commercial GPS equipment and service industry that leads the world.

The new White House policy announces the U.S. Government's intention to terminate the current practice of degrading civil GPS signals within the next decade, providing a better signal for commercial and civilian users of GPS. The policy also reaffirms U.S. commitment to providing basic GPS services, free of direct user fees, for peaceful civil, commercial and scientific users throughout the world.

(more)

GPS originally was designed by the Department of Defense as a dual-use system with the primary purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of U.S. and allied military forces. The basic GPS, which consists of a constellation of 24 satellites, their navigation payloads, and associated ground stations, data links, and command and control facilities, is operated and maintained by the Department of Defense. GPS provides a substantial military advantage for U.S. forces and currently is being integrated into virtually every facet of U.S. military operations.

Key to the renewed U.S. commitment to GPS is a recent Air Force statement of support for the President's policy on GPS. According to Dr. Sheila E. Widnall, Secretary of the Air Force, "The Air Force recognizes the tremendous civil and military aspects of GPS, and fully intends to maintain a 24-satellite constellation for the duration of the program."

The GPS policy review was conducted jointly by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Security Council and issued as a directive of the National Science and Technology Council. A fact sheet describing the new policy is available from the Office of Science and Technology Policy; please fax your request to 202/456-6019.

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