



**STATEMENT BY DR. JAN BRECHT-CLARK
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL COORDINATION OFFICE FOR
SPACE-BASED POSITIONING, NAVIGATION, AND TIMING**

**On the Opening of the Smithsonian Time & Navigation Exhibit
April 10, 2013**

In this fast-paced world of mobile devices and instant information access, we sometimes forget how hard it was to navigate from point “A” to point “B” before we had Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites, online digital maps, and live traffic feeds. Services we take for granted today – such as the ability to track flights, packages, and buses in real-time – were impossible just a few years ago due to the limitations of prior location and navigation technologies.

Thus, it is appropriate and timely that the Smithsonian Institution has opened this new exhibit on “Time & Navigation: The Untold Story of Getting from Here to There.” The exhibit reminds us how much effort it took, prior to the advent of GPS, to plot routes and travel around without getting hopelessly lost – and how this fundamental problem has challenged humankind for centuries. The need for location information inspired some of the most important advancements in science, technology, and engineering, including the mapping of the universe and the invention of accurate clocks.

As part of the government-wide team that ensures the continuous, worldwide availability of GPS services, free of direct user charges, my organization is proud to co-sponsor this major educational venue. We hope it will help the public understand the significant contribution GPS makes to our global information infrastructure.

The National Coordination Office for Space-Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing salutes the National Air and Space Museum and National Museum of American History for producing a world-class exhibit that is sure to inspire our next generation of scientists and engineers.

###

The National Coordination Office for Space-Based Positioning, Navigation, and Timing is a central resource within the U.S. government for GPS-related policy matters. Established by presidential directive, the organization brings together information from multiple federal agencies to assist a National Executive Committee in the management of the GPS enterprise as a national asset. Learn more at www.gps.gov/governance.