



**National Reconnaissance Office
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NROL-70 Launches on Final Delta IV Heavy Rocket
Launch culminates 15 years of the rocket's service to the NRO

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office, in partnership with U.S. Space Force Space Launch Delta 45, Space Systems Command, and United Launch Alliance, successfully launched the NROL-70 mission today at 12:53 p.m. EDT from Space Launch Complex-37 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. This launch marks the end of an era as it is the final Delta IV Heavy rocket and the end of the Delta program.

The NROL-70 mission puts into orbit a national security payload that will deliver critical space-based information to our nation's warfighters, intelligence analysts, and decision makers. It is the latest asset in the NRO's ongoing initiative to develop the most capable, diverse, and resilient overhead constellation in its history.

"All of our missions are important, but this one feels even more special," said Dr. Chris Scolese, director of the NRO. "The launch of the final Delta IV Heavy marks the end of one era and the beginning of a new one. As our mission needs evolve, we are excited to be developing innovative partnerships that allow for new launch vehicles and new launch locations. This will enhance our resilience by providing more options for putting critical capabilities into orbit."

The Delta IV Heavy was built by United Launch Alliance, a joint venture between Boeing and Lockheed Martin. Twelve of these rockets have carried NRO missions, starting with NROL-26, which launched from Cape Canaveral on Jan. 17, 2009. During the NRO's 15-year history with the Delta IV Heavy, seven missions, including NROL-70, launched from Cape Canaveral; and five missions launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, the most recent being NROL-91 in 2022. The broader Delta program began in the late 1950s and launched its first space vehicle in August 1960.

"Launching the last Delta IV is bittersweet for me," said Col. Eric Zarybnisky, director of NRO's Office of Space Launch. "I was part of the NROL-22 team that launched the first Delta IV for the NRO. Since that time, the Delta IV has put amazing capability on orbit for this nation."

Millions of people depend on the information the NRO provides. The Department of Defense and Intelligence Community depend on NRO capabilities for national security, and civilian customers rely on information for priorities like assessing damage from natural disasters, predicting climate change, and helping relief agencies determine how and where to deliver humanitarian aid. Learn more at [NRO.gov](https://www.nro.gov).

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Since 1961, the NRO has been at the forefront of innovation – developing, acquiring, launching, and operating the nation's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance satellites to secure and expand America's advantage in space. We are building a diversified and resilient architecture of spacecraft and ground systems designed to meet the challenges of an evolving space environment amid increasing global competition. We are accelerating innovation and leveraging strategic partnerships, driven by a diverse

and highly skilled workforce. At the NRO, we “See It, Hear It, Sense It” so our nation’s leaders and policymakers have the critical information they need, right when they need it.