NROL68

NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

CAPE CANAVERAL

NRO Mission

For more than sixty years, the NRO has developed, acquired, launched and operated the satellites that are the foundation for America's advantage and strength in space. Using a diversified and resilient architecture of spacecraft, NRO collects and delivers the best space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance content on the planet. NRO data supports the National Security Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and other NRO mission partners to produce intelligence products for the President, Congress, national policymakers, warfighters, and civil users. The NRO's hybrid overhead architecture is designed to provide global coverage against a wide range of intelligence requirements, carry out research and development efforts, and assist emergency and disaster-relief efforts in the U.S. and around the world.

Courtesy ULA

NROL-68

The baby dragon illustrates the birth of a new satellite system while the moon with the mother dragon silhouette represent protection of the Five Eyes community, the nation, and its allies. The passage along the bottom, NUSQUAM CELARE is Latin for "Nowhere to Hide."

The baby dragon may be science fiction, but NROL-68's impact on national security is real!

To read more about NRO launches and previous patches, visit **www.NRO.gov/launch**

LAUNCH HISTORY

NROL-68 is the first numbered NRO launch of 2023, and the second-to-last launch of ULA's Delta IV Heavy. As the penultimate Delta IV launch, NROL-68 builds upon a long legacy of NRO Delta IV Heavy launches dating back to 2009. This launch brings us one step closer to a bittersweet retirement in 2024 when NRO is projected to launch NROL-70, the last Delta IV from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

Rocket & Launch Facts

United Launch Alliance's Delta IV Heavy is a heavy-lift launch vehicle, the largest type of the Delta IV family and one of the world's most powerful rockets. The Delta IV Heavy configuration is comprised of a common booster core (CBC), a cryogenic upper stage and a 5-meter-diameter payload fairing (PLF). The Delta IV Heavy employs two additional CBCs as liquid rocket boosters to augment the first-stage CBC. The Delta IV Heavy can lift 28,370 kg (62,540 lbs) to low Earth orbit and 13,810 kg (30,440 lbs) to geostationary transfer orbit. It is an all liquid-fueled rocket, consisting of an upper stage, one main booster and two strap-on boosters.

Payload Fairing (PLF)

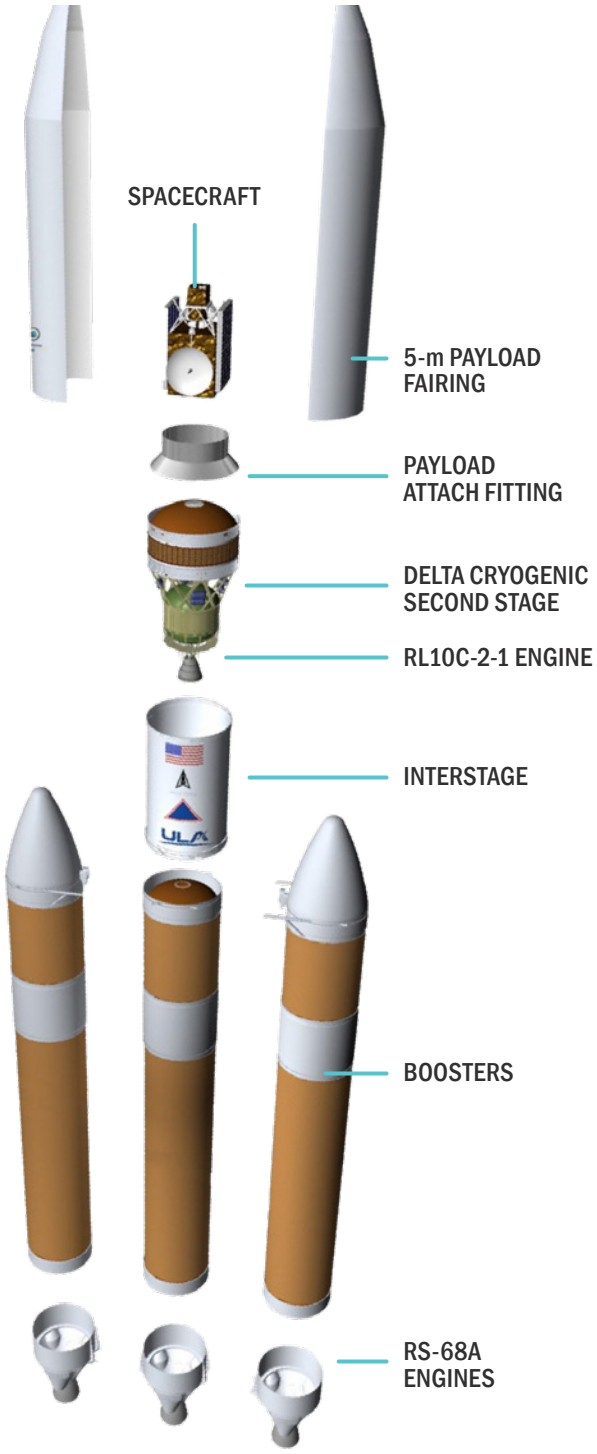
The PLF encapsulates the spacecraft to protect it from the launch environment on ascent. The 19.8 m (65 ft) long PLF makes the vehicle's height approximately 71.5 m (235 ft).

Delta Cryogenic Second Stage (DCSS)

The DCSS is a cryogenic liquid hydrogen/liquid oxygen fueled vehicle, with a single RL10C-2-1 engine that produces 24,750 lbf (110 kN) of thrust.

Boosters

The Delta IV booster propulsion is provided by three liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen-burning RS-68A engines. Each RS-68A engine produces 705,250 lbf (3,137 kN) of thrust for a combined total liftoff thrust of more than 2.1 million lbf (9.4 mega-Newtons).



Site Info

Space Launch Complex-37 (SLC-37)

NROL-68 will launch from Space Launch Complex-37 (SLC-37) at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida. SLC-37 was built in 1962 for earlier programs and retrofitted in 1998 to launch Delta IV vehicles. The first Delta IV Heavy launch from SLC-37 was in December 2004. NROL-68 will be the tenth and penultimate Delta IV Heavy launch from Cape Canaveral.

Recent Success

The NRO is the best in the world at providing overhead intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to more than **half a million government users** —including every member of the Intelligence Community, two dozen domestic agencies, our nation's military, lawmakers, and decision makers.

In 2022 NRO launched the last Delta IV Heavy rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in September.

Visit **www.NRO.gov** to view launch press releases.

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Future Launches

Additional information on upcoming launches will be made available at **www.NRO.gov.**

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