Lockheed Martin's Last Titan IV From Cape Canaveral Successfully Delivers National Security Payload To Space

End of a Proud Era for Air Force and Lockheed Martin Titan IV Team at Launch Complex 40

The United States Air Force and Lockheed Martinwrote the final chapter in a five-decade history at Cape Canaveral tonight with the final launch of a Titan IV B heavy-lift rocket carrying a critical national security payload for the National Reconnaissance Office. The rocket thundered away from its pad adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean amid the cheers of many who had gathered to watch the historic mission.

"With our customers, we share a tremendous pride in this successful flight, tempered only by our sense of sadness as the proud history of Titan here at Cape Canaveral comes to a close for our team," said G. Thomas Marsh, executive vice president of Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company. "It is always impressive to hear the roar of a Titan IV as it streaks into space, but this rocket got help in getting off the ground by the hard work, prayers and wishes of thousands of employees and retirees whose dedication to mission success is unparalleled."

Tonight's launch was the second-to-last launch for the venerable heavy-lift workhorse Titan IV. The final vehicle will fly from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. this summer. In all, 27 Titan IVs have been launched from CCAFS and 11 from Vandenberg. Titan IV is the culmination of a long evolution from the original Titan I intercontinental ballistic missile.

Col. Michael T. Baker, director, Launch Programs, Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command, said, "Titan has performed honorably by providing us strategic deterrence in the form of the Titan ICBMs, helping us explore our universe by launching NASA missions like Cassini, assisting our manned space activities by launching NASA's Gemini test flights and supporting our national decision makers and our warfighters in the field by deploying spacecraft such as the one launched tonight. The men and women of the Martin Marietta Corporation, now Lockheed Martin Space Systems, have much to be proud of. The Air Force is grateful to have been a part of this wonderfully successful program."

Titan IV developed into the nation's heavy-lift workhorse following the Space Shuttle Challenger tragedy in 1986 when assured access to space became critical for the U.S. government. Titan IV A was followed by Titan IV B with a new generation of large solid rocket motors, state-of-the-art guidance and electronics and a new ground processing system.

"At each Titan launch, I have always had the feeling I was standing too close," said Dennis Fitzgerald, acting director, National Reconnaissance Office. "We are coming to the end of an era. The men and women of Team Titan who dedicated their talents and toil to this next-to-last launch have our heartfelt gratitude for their sacrifices. They also have the personal satisfaction of knowing their actions were vitally important to our nation's security."

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company built the Titan IVs near Denver, Colo., under contract to the U.S. government. As prime contractor and systems integrator, the company built the first and second stages and provides overall program management and launch services. Other members of the Titan IV contractor team and their responsibilities include: GenCorp Aerojet Propulsion Division, Sacramento, Calif., liquid rocket engines; Alliant Techsystems, Magna, Utah, solid rocket motor upgrade; The Boeing Company, Huntington Beach, Calif., payload fairing; and Honeywell Space Systems, Clearwater, Fla., advanced guidance.

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, headquartered in Denver, Colo., is one of the major operating units of Lockheed Martin Corporation. Space Systems designs, develops, tests, manufactures and operates a variety of advanced technology systems for military, civil and commercial customers. Chief products include a full-range of space launch systems, ground systems, remote sensing and communications satellites for commercial and government customers, advanced space observatories and interplanetary spacecraft, fleet ballistic missiles and missile defense systems.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation reported 2004 sales of $35.5 billion.

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