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

Proud Era Closes for Air Force and Lockheed Martin Titan IV Team at West Coast Launch Site

The United States Air Force and Lockheed Martinclosed out a proud five-decade history today with the final launch of a Titan IV B rocket carrying a critical national security payload for the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). All eyes were on Space Launch Complex 4 East as the nation's heavy-lift workhorse thundered off the pad to deliver its final payload to space and retire from service.

"Today's spectacular launch is a fitting way to say goodbye to Titan," said G. Thomas Marsh, executive vice president of Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company. "The Lockheed Martin employees who have given their utmost efforts to the program over the years join with our Air Force and NRO customers, and the many other organizations that make up the Titan team, in expressing our great pride in this service to our country's space program."

Today's launch was the last launch for the Titan IV and the culmination of a long evolution from the original Titan I intercontinental ballistic missile. In all, 39 Titan IVs have been launched -- 12 Titan IVs have been launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base on the West Coast plus 27 more from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The final Titan IV mission from Cape Canaveral was launched successfully April 29, 2005.

Col. Michael T. Baker, director, Launch Programs, Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command, said, "The members of the System Program Office are extremely proud to be part of this historic launch. I am particularly honored to lead this SPO since Titan has been a part of my career since 1981. We have been confident from the beginning that the Titan team would deliver one final mission success for the nation."

Following the Space Shuttle Challenger tragedy in 1986, when assured access to space became critical for the U.S. government, the Titan IV was developed as the booster used to launch the nation's largest, heaviest and most critical payloads. Titan initial IV A design 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.

"Today's launch marks the end of an NRO Titan era but the beginning of the Titan Legend that will live on in the history of America's space program," said Col. Chip Zakrzewski, National Reconnaissance Office mission director.

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 135,000 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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