



National Reconnaissance Office
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NRO Successfully Launches Research & Development Demonstrator

Second NRO R&D mission launched in 2025

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) successfully launched a research & development (R&D) demonstrator aboard the Transporter-13 rideshare mission with SpaceX on a Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex-4E at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California on March 15, 2025, at 2:43 a.m. EDT.

The payload, designed and operated by NRO's Advanced Systems & Technology Directorate (AS&T), consists of two 6U CubeSats to support an NRO experimental technology research mission.

This mission is the second NRO R&D demonstrator launched in 2025 and follows the launch of the [Otter R&D payload](#) on SpaceX's Transporter-12 rideshare mission in January.

"The NRO's commitment to demonstrating experimental technology in orbit allows us to stay at the forefront of innovation," said Dr. Aaron Weiner, director of NRO's AS&T. "Through efforts like this, AS&T is posturing the NRO to maintain its advantage in delivering space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems that are responsive to future national security challenges."

For more than 60 years, the NRO has successfully met the needs of its U.S. intelligence, military, civil, and allied partners. It remains the world's leader in unique, space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems. The NRO's next-generation systems will help ensure that the right data is delivered to the right user at the right time, faster than ever before.

Additional information on upcoming NRO launches will be available at [NRO.gov/launch](https://nro.gov/launch).

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Ever since its inception at the dawn of the space age more than 60 years ago, the NRO has brought the farthest reaches of the planet into our grasp — to see it, hear it, and sense it. Today, the NRO is building on that legacy of innovation, harnessing the limitless potential of space to make our nation even safer and stronger. Learn more at [NRO.gov](https://nro.gov).