



**National Reconnaissance Office  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Release #7-25  
April 16, 2025**

## **NRO and Space Force partner through the Rocket Systems Launch Program to launch NROL-174**

*NROL-174 is NRO's first Minotaur rocket launch from Vandenberg since 2011*

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), in partnership with U.S. Space Force Space Systems Command's (SSC) Small Launch and Targets Division, Space Launch Delta 30, and Northrop Grumman, successfully launched multiple national security payloads with the NROL-174 mission aboard a Northrop Grumman Minotaur IV rocket from Space Launch Complex 8 (SLC-8) at Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) April 16, 2025, at 3:33 p.m. EDT.

NROL-174 marks another successful mission in a long-standing partnership with SSC through the Rocket Systems Launch Program (RSLP). RSLP, the small launch counterpart to the National Security Space Launch program, focuses on the small launch market and primarily launches more risk-tolerant experimental, research and development, responsive space, and operational missions.

"This launch is a testament to what the national security launch enterprise is able to achieve," said Laura Robinson, Deputy Director, NRO Office of Space Launch, and NROL-174 Mission Director. "The NROL-174 Minotaur IV rocket was once a Peacekeeper ICBM that sat watch 24/7 in support of our nation's nuclear deterrent. Now modified for space launch, it completed its final mission of placing a national security payload on orbit, a credit to the decades-long dedication of those who were part of the missile's early development, maintenance and operations, and innovative conversion into the Minotaur IV rocket. It was truly a team effort."

NROL-174 is the third NRO mission launched from SSC RSLP's Orbital/Suborbital Program-3 contract. Today's Minotaur IV rocket launch follows previous Minotaur family of rocket launches with [NROL-129](#) in July 2020 and [NROL-111](#) in June 2021, both from Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia. NRO last launched a Minotaur rocket from VSFB with NROL-66 in 2011.

"Superb launch. This was our third Minotaur launch for the NRO since July 2020 and just like then, this mission was textbook...truly outstanding," said Lt. Col. Steve Hendershot, SSC's Materiel Leader for RSLP. "We have a great relationship with our partners at the NRO, and watching today's launch you saw our teamwork, discipline, and trust pay off strong."

Over the past two years, NRO has launched more than 150 satellites, creating the largest and most capable government constellation on orbit in our nation's history. Continuing with this momentum, 2025 is set to be another dynamic year, with approximately a dozen NRO launches scheduled.

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 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 launches will be made available at [NRO.gov/launch](https://www.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://www.nro.gov).*