



**National Reconnaissance Office  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**NRO Launches Thirteenth Proliferated Architecture Mission with NROL-172**  
*Second proliferated National Security Space Launch mission*

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), in partnership with U.S. Space Force Space Systems Command's System Delta 80 (SYD 80), Space Launch Delta 30, and SpaceX, successfully launched the NROL-172 mission aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex-4 East at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California on May 11, 2026, at 10:13 p.m. EDT.

Today's mission is the thirteenth overall launch of the NRO's multi-phenomenology proliferated architecture and second proliferated launch of 2026. NROL-172 is also the second mission in partnership with SSC SYD 80 under the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) Phase 3 Lane 1 Launch Service NRO Task Order awarded in October 2024. NSSL, a government launch acquisition partnership program between SSC and the NRO aimed at ensuring continued assured access to space for national security missions, is overseen and operated by SSC headquartered at Los Angeles Air Force Base in California.

NRO's ability to leverage multiple acquisition approaches demonstrates NRO's commitment to delivering critical national systems on orbit faster than ever before.

The NRO's proliferated architecture, in addition to our other ISR systems, supports multiple missions across the intelligence and Department of War (DoW) communities, including the ground moving target indicator mission as part of the DoW's space-based sensing and targeting architecture.

Through sustained launch activity and accelerated deployment of next-generation systems, NRO fields the most advanced and capable government constellation our nation has ever delivered with hundreds of satellites now on orbit. Building on this momentum, 2026 is poised to be another dynamic year with a robust launch schedule. Many of these missions will advance the NRO's proliferated architecture, with additional proliferated launches planned through 2029 to ensure sustained growth and innovation.

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 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](http://NRO.gov).*