



National Reconnaissance Office Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NROL-55 Lifts Off on October 8, 2015 with Auxiliary Payload

A National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) payload was launched successfully aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket from Space Launch Complex-3E, Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, at 5:49 a.m. PDT, on October 8, 2015.

NROL-55 also carried to orbit an auxiliary payload of 13 CubeSat mini-satellites sponsored by the NRO and NASA in a mission known as GRACE, or Government Rideshare Advanced Concepts Experiment. This was the third CubeSat mission for which the NRO has provided rideshare.

“I commend everyone who made this launch successful. This launch adds another powerful mechanism to the nation’s security toolkit. It also demonstrates the efficiencies of CubeSat rideshare on an NRO mission. This mission is a great example of how NRO, NASA, the Air Force, and our academic colleagues collaborate to amplify innovative technology to support the nation,” said Colonel Clint Hunt, USAF, Director, NRO Office of Space Launch.

The next NRO launch is on schedule for early 2016, also from Vandenberg.

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The NRO is a joint Department of Defense–Intelligence Community organization responsible for developing, launching, and operating America’s intelligence satellites to meet the national security needs of our nation.