



**National Reconnaissance Office
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NRO successfully reuses SpaceX launch booster for first time with NROL-85 mission

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office successfully launched the NROL-85 mission aboard a reflown SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex-4E located at Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) in California today at 6:13 a.m. Pacific Time. The Falcon 9 reusable rocket booster returned safely to Landing Zone 4 after delivering the national security payload to orbit.

NROL-85 is NRO's second launch this year and the first time NRO has reused a rocket booster previously launched to space. The rocket booster core was first launched from VSFB only two months ago, and delivered the NROL-87 mission to orbit. NROL-85 is the 61st launch since NRO began publicly disclosing launches in December 1996.

“All launches are exciting, but this one, with our first-ever re-use of a booster, is a striking indication of how NRO is building innovation and resiliency into everything we do,” said Col. Chad Davis, NRO's director of the Office of Space Launch. “Reusing the booster shows we are continuing to push the boundaries of what's possible while delivering greater value. It reduces our costs, which reflects our commitment to using taxpayer dollars responsibly. This is a great example of how the NRO is working to be a leader in space stewardship.”

NROL-85 is NRO's fourth launch from a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and the second Falcon 9 launch procured through the National Security Space Launch (NSSL) contract. NSSL, a government launch acquisition program aimed at ensuring continued access to space for national security missions, is overseen and operated through U.S. Space Force's Space Systems Command (SSC) headquartered at Los Angeles Air Force Base in California. Along with SSC, USSF's Space Launch Delta 30 was another mission partner supporting today's launch.

“Launching a payload into orbit is the most dynamic aspect of the NRO's mission, but the work that happens behind the scenes—designing, building, and operating our architecture in space—is no less critical to our mission of securing and expanding America's intelligence advantage,” said NRO Director Dr. Chris Scolese. “I'm proud of the teamwork, skill, and determination that went into making this launch a success and ultimately to delivering critical information to our nation's policymakers, military, and Intelligence Community.”

Since 1961, NRO has pushed the envelope of U.S. space-based intelligence collection with boldness and ingenuity. Today, NRO's innovative legacy continues to thrive as it develops, acquires, launches, and operates the world's most capable spy satellites. NROL-85 will strengthen NRO's ability to provide a wide-range of timely intelligence information to national

decision makers, warfighters, and intelligence analysts to protect the Nation's vital interests and support humanitarian efforts worldwide.

Additional information on upcoming launches will be made available at NRO.gov/launch.

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The NRO is the leader in developing, acquiring, launching, and operating the nation's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance satellites to secure and expand America's advantage in space. We are building a diversified and resilient architecture of spacecraft and ground systems designed to meet the challenges of a changing space environment by accelerating innovation and leveraging strategic partnerships, backed by a diverse and highly skilled workforce. At the NRO, we See It, Hear It, Sense It so our nation's warfighters and policymakers have decision advantage amid increasing global competition. Learn more at NRO.gov.