



National Reconnaissance Office
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of Public Affairs
Contact: (703) 808-1198

Release #02-22
Feb. 2, 2022

**NRO celebrates first launch of 2022 and first Falcon 9
National Security Space Launch with NROL-87**

CHANTILLY, Va. — The National Reconnaissance Office successfully launched the NROL-87 mission aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Space Launch Complex-4E located at Vandenberg Space Force Base in California at 12:27 p.m. PST. NROL-87 is the 60th launch since NRO began publicly disclosing launches in December 1996.

The Falcon 9 delivered a national security payload to orbit before the reusable rocket booster safely landed at Landing Zone 4. NROL-87 is designed, built, and operated by the NRO to support its overhead reconnaissance mission. NROL-87 is the NRO’s first launch this year and follows eight launches and 16 payloads placed on orbit in the past 24 months.

“The success of NROL-87 was the result of multiple partnerships and the innovation of our people,” said NRO Director Dr. Chris Scolese. “Technology is ever changing. The relationships we build enable us to recognize solutions faster to ensure we field the latest capabilities. Our people continue to prove they are our greatest asset, solving the most complex problems in new and innovative ways.”

NROL-87 is the NRO’s third launch from a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket but the first Falcon 9 procured from 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 headquartered at Los Angeles Air Force Base in California. Along with SSC, additional mission partners supporting today’s launch include the USSF’s Space Launch Delta 30.

“This launch demonstrates our ability to build the best-in-class systems to protect the United States and our allies from threats in and from space,” said Col. Chad Davis, director, NRO’s Office of Space Launch. “Our partners at SpaceX and U.S. Space Force were vital to the success of this mission today, and their outstanding capabilities make these highly technical missions look routine.”

Since 1961, the 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-87 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 <https://www.nro.gov/launch/>.

###

For sixty years, the NRO has developed, acquired, launched, and operated the satellites that are the foundation for America's advantage and strength in space. Using a diversified architecture of spacecraft, NRO collects and delivers the best space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance content on the planet. Learn more at [NRO.gov](https://www.nro.gov).