Boeing to Launch NASA's IMAGE Observatory on March 25

A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Delta II rocket is poised to lift a NASA imaging satellite into orbit to help scientists understand the sun's activity and its effect on satellites and astronauts in orbit and communications and power systems on Earth.

Scheduled for launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., at 12:34 p.m. PST March 25, the Delta II will boost NASA's Imager for Magnetopause-to-Aurora Global Exploration (IMAGE) spacecraft into a highly elliptical orbit around the Earth's poles. There will be an eight-minute window of opportunity for the launch.

During a two-year NASA-led mission, scientists will use IMAGE to gather remotely sensed images of the planet's magnetic field and how it changes in response to the sun's magnetic activity.

"IMAGE is the first scientific mission of the century for Delta rockets," said Darryl Van Dorn, Boeing director of commercial and NASA Delta programs. "The IMAGE mission is a continuation of a 39-year partnership with NASA," he noted. Delta rockets have carried 82 scientific and technology development payloads into orbit or beyond.

The principal investigator for the IMAGE mission, Southwest Research Institute, contracted Lockheed Martin Missiles and Space to build the spacecraft.

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Boeing Delta Web Site: www.boeing.com/delta/

For further information:
Keith Takahashi
Boeing
(800) 946-4646 pin
149-4784 (pager)
Boeing Communications
(714) 896-1301
Boeing Launch Hotline
(714) 896-4770