U.S. Air Force Funds First Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle Mission

The U. S. Air Force has authorized production of the first Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle -- a Boeing Delta IV -- to support the Defense Satellite Communications System (DSCS).

The vehicle will be used to launch a DSCS satellite in May 2002 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.

"This is an important milestone for our Delta IV program," said Mike Kennedy, EELV/Delta IV vice president. "Our Mission Services team has now begun working with the DSCS program to successfully integrate their satellite and fulfill their launch requirements."

This will be the first launch for the U.S. Air Force's EELV program. The DSCS satellite will be carried into orbit by a Delta IV Medium, which is capable of lifting 9,285 lbs. (4210 kg) to geosynchronous transfer orbit (GTO).

There are five variants of the Boeing Delta IV launch vehicle family that are capable of delivering 9,285 -- 28,950 lbs. (4210 -- 13130 kg) to GTO. Each of the variants can launch single or multiple payloads and together are capable of delivering the entire range of government and commercial payloads to space.

"This is a major vote of confidence in our Delta IV team from our Air Force customers," said Dave Schweikle, Boeing Delta Launch Services, Inc., vice president. "The EELV government/industry partnership has changed the nature and composition of the global launch industry."

In October 1998, the Air Force awarded 19 of the initial 28 EELV missions to Boeing. The initial launch services contract covers small, medium, and heavy payload-class launches from 2001 to 2006.

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Boeing Delta Website www.boeing.com/delta

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