Boeing will Launch NASA Mission to Track Mother Nature

The Boeing [NYSE:BA] Delta team will help NASA scientists better predict environmental changes on Earth by launching the Aqua spacecraft from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., on May 4.

At approximately 2:55 a.m. PDT, a Boeing Delta II rocket will blast off from Space Launch Complex 2 West and thunder into space to place Aqua into a Sun-synchronous orbit.

"Everyone on the Delta team has dedicated themselves to the time and effort needed to launch and deploy Aqua," said Michael Henderson, Boeing Aqua program manager. "Our success will set the stage for NASA scientists to embark on a mission that could improve life on Earth."

Aqua's instruments will allow scientists to gather data to improve weather forecasting, enhance evacuation plans, and steer development away from storm tracks.

To help NASA ensure mission success, the Delta team must accurately place the Aqua spacecraft into its six-year flight path to chronologically map the planet's changes.

"It's a lot like running a relay," Henderson said. "The Delta team is at the starting line, ready to launch and deploy the satellite. And just like a relay, proper placement of the baton -- or in this case the satellite during the exchange -- will help determine the outcome."

For this mission, Boeing will use a new version of its 10-meter wide composite fairing, which has a longer cylindrical section to accommodate larger payloads. It will take the Boeing Delta II approximately one hour of flight to deploy the NASA spacecraft. To date, the Delta II has successfully launched more than 190 NASA missions and maintains a 98 percent success rate.

Aqua is managed by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md. The spacecraft was assembled by TRW in Redondo, Beach, Calif. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., NASA's Langley Research Center in Langley, Va., the National Space Development Agency of Japan, and Brazil's Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais contributed to the project by providing instruments aboard the spacecraft.

Boeing Space and Communications (S&C), headquartered in Seal Beach, Calif., is the world's largest space and communications company. A unit of The Boeing Company, S&C provides integrated solutions in launch services, human space flight and exploration, missile defense, and information and communications. It is NASA's largest contractor; a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; and a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. The global enterprise has customers worldwide and manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Australia.

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Check out our website at:www.boeing.com/delta
For in-depth mission details: Aqua Media Kit

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