Boeing Delta IV Stands Ready on Launch Pad, Points to the Future

The Boeing-built Delta IV rocket was transported to the launch pad Tuesday in preparation for its first flight this August from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.

The launch vehicle, powered by the Boeing Rocketdyne RS-68 main engine, was lifted into a standing position on Launch Pad B at Space Launch Complex (SLC) 37. This sets the stage for the upcoming mission to orbit a telecommunications satellite for Eutelsat S.A. of France.

Boeing Space and Communications, a unit of The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA], builds the Delta IV with lean-manufacturing techniques and processes rockets horizontally at SLC 37, away from the launch pad, to reduce pre-launch on-pad time from 24 days to 10 days.

"It's exciting to see how far we've come in such short time," said Joy Bryant, Delta IV launch site director. In four years, Boeing constructed a new launch complex from the ground up at Cape Canaveral, designed and built the world's most sophisticated rocket manufacturing facility in Decatur, Ala., and began reconstructing the only West Coast launch site to support the U.S. Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program. In addition, a series of critical hot-fire tests were conducted on the Delta IV common booster core.

"We are going to leverage every ounce of launch experience from the team, and take full advantage of our processes that have proven themselves time and time again," Bryant added.

The Delta team will conduct SLC-37 pathfinder activities over the coming months, which will include a brief flight-readiness firing with the booster.

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For additional information and pictures, visit the Boeing Delta Web Site

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