

Delta II Delivers NASA's ICESat and CHIPSat to Space

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A Boeing [NYSE: BA] Delta II rocket successfully launched the Ice, Cloud and land Elevation Satellite (ICESat) and the Cosmic Hot Interstellar Plasma Spectrometer Satellite (CHIPSat) today in a dual primary payload mission for NASA.

The Delta II lifted off at 4:45 p.m. PST from Space Launch Complex 2W, Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., delivering both satellites to circular polar orbits.

ICESat was deployed first at one-hour and four minutes into flight, followed by CHIPSat that was deployed 19 minutes and 20 seconds later. A Delta II 7320-10 launch vehicle with a Reduced Height Dual Payload Attach Fitting (RH-DPAF) was used for the mission. The RH-DPAF enables two satellites of different sizes to be launched aboard the same rocket. ICESat/CHIPSat marks the third dual primary payload mission launched aboard a Delta II rocket for NASA. The other two were EO-1/SAC-C on Nov. 21, 2000 and Jason-1/TIMED on Dec. 7, 2001.

"I'd like to thank the Delta team for another mission success. The excellent cooperation between the many industry and government participants involved in this mission made this achievement possible. I look forward to the opportunities in 2003 to add to our string of 49 consecutive successful Delta II missions as we continue to provide reliable launch services for our customers," said Jay Witzling, vice president and Delta deputy program manager.

The next Delta II mission is GPS IIR-8 for the U.S. Air Force on Jan. 29 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla. The next Delta II launch for NASA is the Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF) aboard the new Delta II Heavy in April from Cape Canaveral. The Delta II Heavy uses nine 46-inch diameter Alliant Techsystems solid rocket motors designed for the Delta III, that add 25 percent more thrust capability for the Delta II.

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