

Boeing-built X-37B Orbital Test Vehicle Successfully Completes 3rd Flight

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Unmanned spacecraft concludes record-setting 674-day mission

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, Calif., Oct. 17, 2014— The Boeing [NYSE: BA]-built X-37B Orbital Test Vehicle (OTV) successfully de-orbited and landed today at Vandenberg Air Force Base at 9:24 a.m. PDT, concluding a 674-day experimental test mission for the U.S. Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office. The X-37B was launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., on Dec. 11, 2012.

“We congratulate the Air Force Rapid Capabilities Office and the 30th Space Wing at Vandenberg Air Force Base on this third successful OTV mission,” said Ken Torok, Boeing director of Experimental Systems. “With a program total of 1,367 days on orbit over three missions, these agile and powerful small space vehicles have completed more days on orbit than all 135 Space Shuttle missions combined, which total 1,334 days. The innovative X-37B combines the best of an aircraft and a spacecraft into an affordable, responsive unmanned vehicle and continues to demonstrate that reusable space vehicles are affordable options that support vital missions.”

The first OTV mission began April 22, 2010, and concluded on Dec. 3, 2010, after 224 days in orbit. The second OTV mission began March 5, 2011, and concluded on June 16, 2012, after 468 days on orbit.

The X-37B program is demonstrating a reliable, reusable unmanned space test platform for the Air Force. Its objectives include space experimentation, risk reduction and concept-of-operations development for reusable space vehicle technologies that could become key enablers for future space missions.


Boeing's commitment to this space-based unmanned vehicle spans a decade and includes support to the Air Force Research Lab's X-40 program, NASA's X-37 program and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's X-37 Approach & Landing Test Vehicle program.

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