

Delta IV heavy blasts off from California

January 21 2011, By Nancy Atkinson

In an impressive show of rocket power, a United Space Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket launched on Thursday afternoon with a classified spy satellite from the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

This was the first launch of a Delta IV Heavy from Vandenberg, and was the largest rocket to ever launch from the west coast of the U.S. The satellite is for the U.S. National Reconnaissance Office.

Although not many details were released about the NROL-49 [satellite](#), analysts say it is capable of snapping pictures so detailed it can distinguish the make and model of an automobile thousands of miles below.

With its nearly 2 millions pounds of thrust, the Delta IV Heavy is currently America's most powerful liquid fueled [rocket](#).

Provided by [Universe Today](#)

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