

Image: Tracking and Data Relay satellite prepared for launch

January 15 2014



Credit: NASA/Kim Shiflett

Inside the Astrotech payload processing facility in Titusville, Fla., NASA's Tracking and Data Relay Satellite, or TDRS-L, spacecraft has

been encapsulated in its payload fairing. It is being lifted by crane for mounting on a transporter for its trip to Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

The TDRS-L satellite will be a part of the second of three next-generation spacecraft designed to ensure vital operational continuity for the NASA Space Network. TDRS-L is scheduled to launch from Cape Canaveral's Space Launch Complex 41 atop a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket at 9:05 p.m. EST on Jan. 23, 2014, the start of a 30-minute launch window.

The current Tracking and Data Relay Satellite system consists of eight in-orbit satellites distributed to provide near continuous information relay contact with orbiting spacecraft ranging from the International Space Station and Hubble Space Telescope to the array of scientific observatories.

Provided by NASA

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