

# Rocket with defense payload launches from California

February 10 2016

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A Delta 4 rocket lifts off over Lompoc, Calif., carrying a payload for the National Reconnaissance Office early Wednesday morning, Feb. 10, 2016, from Vandenberg Air Force Base. The NRO operates the nation's system of intelligence-gathering satellites. (Len Wood/The Lompoc Record via AP)

A rocket carrying a U.S. national defense payload was successfully launched from California before dawn Wednesday, the Air Force said.

The Delta IV rocket lifted off from Vandenberg Air Force Base at 3:40 a.m. The rocket's flight toward space was visible from the greater Los Angeles area more than 100 miles away as high pressure swept skies

clear.

The rocket carried a payload for the National Reconnaissance Office, which operates the nation's system of intelligence-gathering satellites. The agency didn't release any details about the payload.

The mission, designated NROL-45, was in support of national defense, said United Launch Alliance, the launch provider.



In this photo provided by United Launch Alliance, a Delta 4 rocket lifts off from

from California's Vandenberg Air Force Base carrying a payload for the National Reconnaissance Office early Wednesday morning, Feb. 10, 2016. The NRO operates the nation's system of intelligence-gathering satellites. (United Launch Alliance via AP)



In this photo provided by United Launch Alliance, a Delta 4 rocket lifts off from from California's Vandenberg Air Force Base carrying a payload for the National Reconnaissance Office early Wednesday morning, Feb. 10, 2016. The NRO operates the nation's system of intelligence-gathering satellites. (United Launch Alliance via AP)

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