

Satellite-carrying rocket 'lost' after New Zealand launch

July 5 2020

A commercial rocket carrying seven satellites was "lost" after take-off Sunday from a New Zealand launch pad, the owner Rocket Lab said.

"We lost the flight late into the mission," Peter Beck, Rocket Lab's founder and chief executive, tweeted.

"I am incredibly sorry that we failed to deliver our customers' satellites today. Rest assured we will find the issue, correct it and be back on the pad soon."

Rocket Lab lists itself as a US company with headquarters at a wholly-owned New Zealand subsidiary and specialises in delivering small satellites to low Earth orbit.

Its backers include US companies Khosla Ventures, Bessemer Venture Partners, Lockheed Martin, Promus Ventures and Data Collective.

The failed mission, the company's 13th payload launch, had been named "Pics Or It Didn't Happen".

In a statement on its website, Rocket Lab said it had experienced an "anomaly" four minutes into the flight and was working closely with the Federal Aviation Administration in the United States to identify the cause.

The rocket was carrying satellites for companies Spaceflight, Canon

Electronics, Planet and In-Space Missions, Beck said.

"Today's anomaly is a reminder that space launch can be unforgiving, but we will identify the issue, rectify it, and be safely back on the pad as soon as possible."

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