A United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy rocket will launch the NROL-44 mission for the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). Liftoff will occur from Space Launch Complex-37 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida.

When the United States needs eyes and ears in critical places where no human can reach – be it over the most rugged terrain or through the most hostile territory – it turns to the NRO. The NRO is the U.S. government agency tasked with designing, building, launching and maintaining America's intelligence satellites. Whether creating the latest innovations in satellite technology, contracting with the most cost-efficient industrial suppliers, conducting rigorous launch schedules, or providing the highest-quality products to our customers, the NRO never loses focus on who they are working to protect: our nation and its citizens.

Beginning in 1961 to declassification to the public in 1992, the NRO has worked tirelessly to provide the best reconnaissance support possible to the Intelligence Community and Department of Defense.

Payload Fairing (PLF)
The PLF is a metallic trisector (three-piece shell), 5-meter diameter fairing. The PLF encapsulates the spacecraft to protect it from the launch environment on ascent. The vehicle’s height, with the 19.8-m (65-ft) long PLF, is approximately 71.6 m (235 ft).

Delta Cryogenic Second Stage (DCSS)
The DCSS propellant tanks are structurally rigid and constructed of isogrid aluminum ring forgings and spun-formed aluminum domes. It is a cryogenic liquid hydrogen/liquid oxygen-fueled vehicle, with a single RL10B-2 engine that produces 110.1 kilo-Newtons (24,750 lbs) of thrust. The DCSS cryogenic tanks are insulated with a combination of spray-on and bond-on insulation, and helium-purged insulation blankets. An equipment shelf attached to the aft dome of the DCSS liquid oxygen tank provides the structural mountings for vehicle electronics.

Boosters
The Delta IV booster tanks are structurally rigid and constructed of isogrid aluminum barrels, spun-formed aluminum domes and machined aluminum tank skirts. Booster propulsion is provided by three liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen-burning RS-68A engines. Each RS-68A engine produces 312.3 kilo-Newtons (702,000 lbs) of thrust for a combined total liftoff thrust of more than 2.1 million pounds. Booster cryogenic tanks are insulated with a combination of spray-on and bond-on insulation and helium-purged insulation blankets. The DCSS flight computer controls all phases of flight.