Space Systems Command
Media Release

SPACE SYSTEMS COMMAND
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LDPE-2 spacecraft encapsulated, mated to Falcon Heavy rocket for launch Nov. 1

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. - Space Systems Command's U.S. Space Force (USSF)-44 integrated payload, which contains the Long Duration Propulsive EELV (Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle) Secondary Payload Adapter (LDPE)-2 space vehicle, has been encapsulated and mated with its SpaceX Falcon Heavy launch vehicle. This launch will be SpaceX's first Falcon Heavy used for a National Security Space Launch (NSSL) mission.

The LDPE platform is a standardized satellite bus that can host multiple payloads, including separable spacecraft to leverage available mass margin on NSSL missions. The design is modular and employs standard interfaces that minimize non-recurring engineering work required to integrate new payloads. This approach makes rideshare more affordable for a wide range of small and secondary payloads and takes several steps to accelerating the USSF's pivot to new, more resilient space architectures.

The Enterprise Enabler Development Branch, within the Innovation and Prototype Acquisition Delta manages the LDPE program. This is the second of three missions for the LDPE program. LDPE-1 launched aboard the Space Test Program (STP)-3 mission on Dec. 7, 2021, and LDPE-3A is scheduled to launch with the USSF-67 mission in January 2023.

"The LDPE-2 platform allows the USSF to cost-effectively prototype new elements of future space architectures before making major investments across the enterprise," said Brig. Gen. Tim Sejba, SSC's Program Executive Officer for Space Domain Awareness and Combat Power. "This capability has broad potential to fill capability gaps in our space systems architecture and provide helpful services for our mission partners with frequent and low-cost access to orbit."

With mating completed, the team will perform final electrical and functional testing as an integrated stack and put the space vehicles in their final physical flight configuration in preparation for roll to the launch pad. The USSF-44 mission is scheduled to launch Nov. 1 from the historic Space Launch Complex (SLC)- 39A at Kennedy Space Center, Florida. SpaceX will provide a live webcast at www.spacex.com, beginning approximately ten minutes before its scheduled liftoff time of 9:41 a.m. EDT (6:41 a.m. PDT) and conclude after touchdown of the side boosters at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station’s Landing Zones (LZ)-1 and -2.

Space Systems Command is the U.S. Space Force field command responsible for rapidly developing, acquiring, equipping, fielding and sustaining lethal and resilient space capabilities. SSC mission capability areas include launch acquisition and operations, communications and positioning, navigation and timing (PNT), space sensing, battle management command, control and communications (BMC3), and space domain awareness & combat power. SSC is headquartered at Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo, Calif.

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Interested media representatives may submit questions regarding this topic by sending an email to sscpa.media@spaceforce.mil

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SpaceX’s Falcon Heavy begins rolling up the ramp to the launch pad at NASA Kennedy Space Center’s Launch Complex-39A, Oct. 31. The vehicle will go vertical later this evening. Launch is scheduled for Nov. 1 at 9:41 a.m. Eastern (6:41 a.m. Pacific) (Photo: SpaceX)

SpaceX's Falcon Heavy with the USSF-44 payload for the U.S. Space Force begins rolling out of its hangar at NASA Kennedy Space Center's Launch Complex-39A and up the ramp to the launch pad. Oct. 31. The vehicle will go vertical later this evening. Launch is scheduled for Nov. 1 at 9:41 a.m. Eastern (6:41 a.m. Pacific) (Photo: SpaceX)