

4 SPACE LAUNCH SQUADRON



MISSION

The 4th Space Launch Squadron was activated to lead the Air Force's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle program on the west coast. The squadron's Delta IV and Atlas V launch vehicles provide the nation's sole medium/heavy lift capability to polar orbit. Insight into Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle operations enables the squadron's essential mission of providing continuous risk assessment and mission assurance for the 30th Space Wing and the Space and Missile Systems Center.

Delta IV is Boeing's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle. There are many different configurations for the Delta IV, capable of lifting anywhere from 9,000lb to 13,000lb into Geosynchronous Orbit.

Atlas V is Lockheed Martin's Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle. Also with many different available configurations, this system can lift between 10,000lb and 30,000lb to Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit.

LINEAGE

4 Space Launch Squadron constituted, 29 Mar 1994

Activated, 15 Apr 1994

Inactivated, 29 Jun 1998

Activated, 1 Dec 2003

Inactivated, 31 May 2019

STATIONS

Vandenberg AFB, CA, 15 Apr 1994-29 Jun 1998

Vandenberg AFB, CA, 1 Dec 2003-31 May 2019

ASSIGNMENTS

30 Operations Group, 15 April 1994 – 29 June 1998

30 Launch Group, 1 Dec 2003 – 20 July 2018

30 Operations Group, 20 July 2018 – 31 May 2019

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Titan IV, 1995-1997

Titan II, 1997-1998

Atlas

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Michael E. Hatch, 15 Apr 1994

Lt Col Edwin A. Zehner, 21 Jun 1996

Maj Christopher B. Hale, 21 Jul 1997

Lt Col Richard M. Patenaude, 10 Oct 1997

None (unmanned), 18 May-29 Jun 1998

Lt Col Lee W. Rosen, 1 Dec 2003

Lt Col David B. Goldstein, 20 Jun 2005

Lt Col Heather R. Knight, 17 Jul 2007

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 1994-30 Sep 1996

1 Oct 1996-30 Sep 1997

1 Jan-31 Dec 1997

1 Jan 1998-[29 Jun 1998]

EMBLEM

Approved, 31 Mar 1995



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

1996 The 4th Space Launch Squadron, 30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, CA, successfully launched the first Titan IV from Vandenberg in more than two years, boosting a classified payload into polar orbit on December 5. A Titan IV launched from the base in August 1993 exploded a few minutes into the flight. Three of the nation's largest expendable boosters launched from Cape Canaveral AS, Fla., in 1995. Current plans call for five launches each in 1996 and 1997.

9/13/2012 - The 4th SLS executes Western Range Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle spacelift operations with a combined team of engineers, space operators, program managers and missile assurance technicians. "Any time someone is touching the rocket we have to have a mission assurance technician from the 4th SLS out there observing operations," said Maj. Joseph Howerton, 4th SLS Atlas V flight commander. "Mission assurance technicians have missile maintenance backgrounds, so they have the hands-on experience to know what to look for." Airmen are currently engaged in preparations for the Atlas V rocket carrying a National Reconnaissance Office payload into orbit from Space Launch Complex-3 here. "We are looking good (for launch) from a launch vehicle prospective," said Howerton. "This is one of the cleanest launch vehicles we have seen for Atlas; we have not seen any major issues." This will be the fifth Atlas V mission for Vandenberg, and Howerton's second mission as the Atlas V flight commander. "Before launch I have Airmen out at the pad watching the corners of the mobile service tower during roll back," said Howerton. "They are watching the sides of the tower to

ensure it is not hitting the launch vehicle, and if anything happens they can troubleshoot." Technicians from the 4th SLS provide over-the-shoulder support to United Launch Alliance launch contractors on Delta and Atlas flight vehicles. "On the day of launch we make sure all the preparations are completed on the pad," said Tech. Sgt. Jessie Carter, 4th SLS mission assurance technician. "We roll the building back, clear the site and then they fuel the rocket up while we stay back at a safe distance."

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 23 Nov 2010

Updated: 24 Oct 2012

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.