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## GeoEye-1 Gains Success With VAFB Launch

**GeoEye, Inc. has reported the successful launch and deployment of GeoEye-1, the world's highest resolution, commercial Earth-imaging satellite.** GeoEye's ground station in Norway relayed the downlink signal it received from *GeoEye-1* confirming that the satellite successfully separated from the second stage of the launch vehicle and began automatically initializing its onboard systems. GeoEye-1 is part of the **NGA NextView** program. The NextView program is designed to ensure that the NGA has access to commercial imagery in support of its mission to provide timely, relevant and accurate geospatial intelligence in support of national security. GeoEye won its \$500-million NextView contract in September 2004 and was able to build and launch GeoEye-1 without any contract cost overruns in less than four years after contract award. The 4310-pound satellite was launched at 11:50 a.m. PDT on a **United Launch Alliance Delta II** rocket from **Vandenberg Air Force Base** in California.

GeoEye-1 will simultaneously collect 0.41-meter ground resolution black-and-white (panchromatic) images and 1.65-meter color (multispectral) images. Designed to take digital images of the Earth from 423 miles (681 kilometers) and moving at a speed of about four-and-a-half miles (seven kilometers) per second, the satellite camera can distinguish objects on the Earth's surface as small as 0.41-meter or 16 inches in size. Due to U.S.

licensing restrictions, commercial customers will get access to imagery at half-meter ground resolution. GeoEye-1 was built by **General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems** in Gilbert, Arizona. The imaging system was built by **ITT** in Rochester, New York. ITT is also building the imaging system for *GeoEye-2* slated for launch in 2011. The launch of GeoEye-1 marks the 83rd consecutive successful launch of the Delta II rocket.



*An United Launch Alliance Delta II rocket, on behalf of Boeing Launch Services, blasts off with the GeoEye-1 satellite from Space Launch Complex-2 at Vandenberg AFB, CA. The successful launch concluded approximately 75 minutes later with signal acquisition from the satellite in its proper orbit.*

*Photo by Carleton Bailie, The Boeing Company*



*GeoEye-1 launch site at Vandenberg AFB, California*

*Credit: GeoEye*