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Aerojet Rocketdyne Supports ULA Launch of Classified Satellite for the U.S. Government

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Sept. 24, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Aerojet Rocketdyne, Inc., a subsidiary of Aerojet Rocketdyne Holdings, Inc. (NYSE:AJRD), successfully supported the launch of a classified payload for the U.S. National Reconnaissance Office. The mission was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California aboard a United Launch Alliance (ULA) Atlas V rocket. Aerojet Rocketdyne propulsion systems on the Atlas V included the RL10C-1 upper-stage engine, four solid rocket boosters (SRBs), six helium pressurization tanks, and 12 Centaur upper-stage Reaction Control System (RCS) thrusters.

"We're delighted to continue providing propulsion systems in support of our warfighters, at home and overseas," said Aerojet Rocketdyne CEO and President Eileen Drake. "Reliability is the strong suit of our products, and we look forward to supporting future missions to ensure our nation's security and that of our allied forces."

"Today's flawless performance of our propulsion systems is a reflection of the continuing dedication and professionalism of everyone at Aerojet Rocketdyne--from the solid rocket boosters made at our facility in Sacramento, California; to our RL10C-1 produced at our site in West Palm Beach, Florida; to the pressurization tanks made by ARDÉ in Carlstadt, New Jersey; to the RCS thrusters manufactured at our facility in Redmond, Washington," said Jerry Tarnacki, senior vice president of the Space Systems Business Unit at Aerojet Rocketdyne. "Congratulations to all."

Aerojet Rocketdyne's role in the launch began during liftoff when four SRBs ignited to provide 1.5 million pounds of total increased thrust to launch the Atlas V rocket. (Each 67-foot-long, 5-foot-wide composite motor case contains more than 90,000 pounds of propellant, providing more than 375,000 pounds of liftoff thrust.) All Atlas V launches requiring extra boost have flown Aerojet Rocketdyne SRBs

Aerojet Rocketdyne's RL10C-1 upper-stage engine ignited after separation of the first stage to place the payload into orbit, helped by the Centaur RCS thrusters and pressurization tanks. The RL10C-1 delivers 22,890 pounds of thrust to power the Atlas V upper stage, using cryogenic liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen propellants.

The RL10C-1 was developed from the RL10 family of upper-stage engines, which has accumulated one of the most impressive track records of accomplishments in the history of space propulsion. More than 480 RL10 engines have supported launches over the last 50 years, playing a vital role in placing military, government and commercial satellites into orbit, and powering scientific space probes on every interplanetary mission in our solar system.

The 12 MR-106 RCS thrusters are assembled in four rocket engine modules and provide pitch, yaw and roll control for the Centaur upper stage as well as settling burns prior to firing the RL10C-1 engine. ARDÉ, a subsidiary of Aerojet Rocketdyne based in New Jersey, manufactures the pressure vessels on the first and second stages of the launch vehicle.

Aerojet Rocketdyne is an innovative company delivering solutions that create value for its customers in the aerospace and defense markets. The company is a world-recognized aerospace and defense leader that provides propulsion and energetics to the space, missile defense and strategic systems, tactical systems and armaments areas, in support of domestic and international markets. Additional information about Aerojet Rocketdyne can be obtained by visiting our websites at www.Rocket.com and www.AerojetRocketdyne.com.

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