Bidding Farewell to a Space Industry Workhorse

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- *ICESat-2 launch marks final flight for the Delta II launch vehicle; would be its 100th successful launch in a row*
- *Aerojet Rocketdyne RS-27 and AJ10 engines have powered the rocket's first and second stages with 100 percent reliability*
- *AJ10 engine family will continue to fly as part of NASA's Orion spacecraft program*

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Sept. 13, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- The upcoming launch of a NASA ice monitoring satellite, ICESat-2, will be the last for United Launch Alliance's (ULA) medium-lift Delta II rocket, whose reliability made it a workhorse for civil, military and commercial space customers. The Delta II features main and upper-stage engines supplied by Aerojet Rocketdyne.

With roots tracing back to the dawn of the space age, the Delta II has an admirable success record since debuting almost three decades ago in 1989. A successful launch of NASA's ICESat-2 satellite, currently scheduled for Sept. 15 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, would mark the 100th successful launch in a row for the vehicle, whose payloads have ranged from national security missions to commercial communications satellites to Mars rovers.

"The Delta II will go down in history as one of the world's most successful launch vehicles, and we're proud to be part of that legacy," said Eileen Drake, Aerojet Rocketdyne's CEO and president.

The Delta II's RS-27A first-stage engine, fueled by liquid-oxygen and kerosene, is descended from Aerojet Rocketdyne's H-1 engine, which powered the main stages of the Saturn I and IB rockets. The RS-27A generates 200,000 pounds of thrust at sea level and features two vernier engines for roll control during flight.

The AJ10-118K engine that powers the second stage of the Delta II has its origins in the ballistic missile programs of the 1950s. Fueled by hydrazine, the engine generates 9,850 pounds of thrust at altitude.

"This final Delta II launch will mark the 241st flight of the RS-27 and the 277th flight of the AJ10; all delivering 100 percent reliability to ensure mission success for our customers," continued Drake. "This outstanding track record represents the hard work and dedication of generations of Aerojet Rocketdyne employees over the decades."

Although the ICESat-2 launch likely marks the end of the evolutionary line for the RS-27A, the AJ10 engine family will continue to fly as part of NASA's Orion spacecraft program. The main engine on Orion's European-built Service Module is derived from the space shuttle's Orbital Maneuvering System engine, which shares a common heritage with the AJ10-118K.

About Aerojet Rocketdyne: Aerojet Rocketdyne, a subsidiary of Aerojet Rocketdyne Holdings, Inc. (NYSE:AJRD), is a world-recognized aerospace and defense leader that provides propulsion systems and energetics to the space, missile defense and strategic systems, and tactical systems areas, in support of domestic and international customers. For more information, visit www.Rocket.com and www.AerojetRocketdyne.com. Follow Aerojet Rocketdyne and CEO Eileen Drake on Twitter at @AerojetRdyne and @DrakeEileen.

Media Contacts:
Todd McConnell, Aerojet Rocketdyne, 561-882-5395
Todd.McConnell@rocket.com
Mary Engola, Aerojet Rocketdyne, 571-289-1371
Mary.Engola@rocket.com

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