

# NASA News



National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

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## **ROCKET LAUNCH SET FOR APRIL 23 FROM NASA WALLOPS FLIGHT FACILITY**

The Missile Defense Agency, in partnership with NASA and the U.S. Air Force, plans to conduct a rocket launch between 3 and 3:30 a.m., April 23, 2007, from the NASA Wallops Island Facility, Va.

Called the Near Field Infrared Experiment (NFIRE), the mission involves launching a four-stage Minotaur I rocket carrying a satellite to collect scientific data that will be used to help with the development of future missile defense technology efforts.

The primary payload is the Track Sensor Payload that will collect images of the exhaust plume from two rockets to be launched later this year from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

The secondary payload is a laser communications terminal that will be used to evaluate the utility of laser communications for missile defense applications as part of a U.S./Germany cooperative scientific activity.

The space launch vehicle will follow a southeast trajectory downrange over the Atlantic Ocean to the south of Bermuda and past the east coast of South America as it achieves a trajectory to low earth orbit.

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