New Pad Constructed for Smaller Rocket Launches

NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida took another step forward in its transformation to a 21st century multi-user spaceport with the completion of the new Small Class Vehicle Launch Pad, designated 39C, in the Launch Pad 39B area.

This designated pad to test smaller rockets will make it more affordable for smaller aerospace companies to develop and launch from the center, and to break into the commercial spaceflight market.

Kennedy Director Bob Cabana and representatives from the Ground Systems Development and Operations (GSDO) Program and the Center Planning and Development (CPD) and Engineering Directorates marked the completion of the new pad during a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 17.

"As America’s premier spaceport, we’re always looking for new and innovative ways to meet America’s launch needs, and one area that was missing was small class payloads," Cabana said. "Using 21st Century funds, we built Pad 39C."

GSDO oversaw the project and is working with CPD to grow commercial space efforts at Kennedy. Construction of the pad began in January and was completed in June.

For the complete story, visit http://go.nasa.gov/1RDVhBr.
Load test No.1 on the Interim Cryogenic Propulsive Stage Umbilical (ICPSU) arm for NASA's Space Launch System (SLS) was completed July 23 at Coastal Steel in Cocoa, Florida. The test consisted of applying six vertical loads and eight horizontal loads onto the truss in the retracted position to simulate the effects of a launch on the structure. Engineers and technicians from NASA Kennedy Space Center and Coastal applied the loads by hanging weights off the ICPSU structure. The ICPSU is one of the umbilical arms that will be attached to the mobile launcher. The umbilical will be located at about the 240-foot-level and will supply fuel, oxidizer, pneumatics, hazard gas leak detection, electrical commodities and environmental control systems to the interim cryogenic propulsive stage of the SLS rocket during launch. Photo credit: NASA/Daniel Casper