



News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Falcon HTV-2 Launch Tests Hypersonic Vehicle Flight Capabilities

Vandenberg AFB, Calif., April 23, 2010 ... The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) announced that it launched its Falcon Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 (HTV-2) at 16:00 PDT yesterday.

Preliminary review of technical data indicates the Minotaur Lite launch system successfully delivered the Falcon HTV-2 glide vehicle to the desired separation conditions. The launch vehicle executed first of its kind energy management maneuvers, clamshell payload fairing release and HTV-2 deployment. Approximately 9 minutes into the mission, telemetry assets experienced a loss of signal from the HTV-2. An engineering team is reviewing available data to understand this event.

This flight represents many historic firsts for both the launch system and the HTV-2 vehicle. Three test ranges, six sea-based and two airborne telemetry collection assets were employed and operational on the day of launch. Technical data collected during the flight will provide insight into the hypersonic flight characteristics of the HTV-2.

DARPA's Falcon HTV-2 program objective is developing and testing an unmanned, rocket-launched, maneuverable, hypersonic air vehicle that glides through the Earth's atmosphere at incredibly fast speeds—up to Mach 20. The key technical challenges of the HTV-2 program are the design and testing of an innovative high lift-to-drag aerodynamic shape, advanced lightweight but tough thermal protection structures, materials and fabrication technologies, autonomous hypersonic navigation guidance and control systems, and an autonomous flight safety system.

For more information about the aircraft and DARPA's HTV-2 demonstration program, please visit www.darpa.mil/newsroom or www.darpa.mil/tto/programs/Falcon.htm

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