

Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.policy/2005-08/msg00942.html>

- *From:* "Ed Kyle" <edkyle99@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 16 Aug 2005 07:42:00 -0700
-

George William Herbert wrote:

> Ed Kyle <edkyle99@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

>>

>> Since the EELVs duplicate each other's capabilities

>> and not those of Delta II, why not keep Delta II

>> and drop one of the EELVs instead? I bet DoD

>> would save a lot more cash that way.

>

> What makes you think that the marginal cost of a Delta II core and

> 9 GEMs is less than that of a Delta IV core and small upper stage?

I think Boeing did this comparison several years ago and decided to keep Delta II and cancel Delta IV Light (I'm assuming that is what you mean by "small upper stage"). But even a Delta IV Light would have 1.5 times or so more dry mass than a Delta 7920, so the odds are that it would have higher marginal costs.

The issue is that there are currently three active ELV production lines, with their inherent fixed costs, and all three are underutilized. If one has to go to save money, wouldn't more money be saved by shutting down one of the bigger vehicle lines?

On the other hand, if the argument is that the bigger EELV vehicles are so flexible and wonderful that they can handle the Delta II class payloads, then, since the EELVs duplicate each other and would still be underutilized even with the Delta II payloads, why not shut down *two* production lines and just keep one EELV?

I think the latter option is where we're heading. All three production lines are going to be under one roof soon. If Delta II is shut down, and it seems the pressure is on to shut it down, then this co-production setup, where the Alliance will supposedly pick the best vehicle for each payload, will soon find itself picking only the better of

Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV

the two EELVs (and I think we all know which one it is) over and over again. They won't have to shut down one of the EELV lines. It will just stop running by default.

– Ed Kyle

• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ *Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV*
 ◇ *From:* Brian Thorn
- ◆ *Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV*