

## Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.policy/2005-08/msg01173.html>

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- *From:* Brian Thorn <[bthorn64@xxxxxxxx](mailto:bthorn64@xxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Sat, 20 Aug 2005 16:51:51 -0500
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On 18 Aug 2005 20:45:38 -0700, "Ed Kyle" <[edkyle99@xxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:edkyle99@xxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

>If you are going to argue getting rid of a launch  
>vehicle line to save money, why not get rid of the  
>more expensive (Delta IV) line, which is a duplicate  
>of the Atlas V line?

Because Delta IV is the most versatile of the three. It can be tailored for -Heavy, -Medium and -Lite. An Atlas 5-Lite would be severe overkill.

>Why not shut down the RS-68  
>line, which much cost more than the RS-27A line?

Because it's three times more powerful than RS-27A and lets you conduct launches without needing temperamental solids?

>If you want to keep the more reliable launch vehicle,  
>why not keep Delta II, which has suffered only two  
>failures in 119 flights,

Both due to solids, which you can eliminate with Delta IV-Lite.

>versus one failure in four for Delta IV?

I'd hardly call the -Heavy Demo a failure. That is what test flights are for, afterall. And it did make an orbit that would have been useful to a real payload (unlike Orion F3 on Delta III No.2 or the Milstar dumped hopelessly low by Titan IV-Centaur.)

>If you want to keep the simplest launch processing  
>site, why not keep Complex 17 (a simple launch stand  
>with a relatively small mobile tower)

....and everything done out in the open. You too can be working near solids when lightning starts to come into the area (which is every summer afternoon, more or less.)

>instead of

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>Complex 37 (which has a massive horizontal integration  
>building \*and\* a massive pad with a massive mobile  
>tower)?

Those are arguments \*for\* Delta IV, not against it. For years, folks in sci.space sang the praises of Russia's horizontal processing technique, and many cried foul when Atlas 5 didn't go that route.

>Why not keep the vehicle that can be flown to the  
>launch site rather than ponderously barged?

Boeing says the Delta Mariner can haul 18 complete Delta IVs each year. If we need more, Delta Mariner II shouldn't be hard to build, or maybe rent Boeing's 787-hauler. (Mariner is not a barge, it's a ship.)

>If you want to keep the vehicle with the shortest  
>launch processing campaign, why not keep Delta II,  
>with its proven 6-week schedule, rather than Delta IV  
>which, irregardless of what the planners guide's say,  
>has yet to be turned around in anything less than  
>\*months\*?

Atlas 5 has yet to be turned around that fast, either, but you sing its praises. It seems to me that neither EELV has been pushed very hard yet in turns of launch campaigns, because neither has had many payloads to launch yet. That will change. We're not talking about dumping Delta II until the current contracts expire, plenty of time to change our minds if Delta IV starts to perform Ocean Insertion Firings and we get an RD-180 manufacturing site in the U.S.

Brian

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• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV**  
◇ From: George William Herbert

• *References:*

- ◆ **Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV**  
◇ From: Ed Kyle
- ◆ **Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV**  
◇ From: Kim Keller
- ◆ **Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV**  
◇ From: Ed Kyle
- ◆ **Re: Air Force Signs Off on SRB-CEV**  
◇ From: George William Herbert
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