

# GeoEye-1 Satellite Launch Successful



GeoEye has successfully launched GeoEye-1, the world's highest resolution, commercial Earth-imaging satellite. GeoEye's ground station in Norway relayed the downlink signal it received from GeoEye-1 confirming that the satellite successfully separated from the second stage of the launch vehicle and began automatically initialising its onboard systems.

Bill Schuster, GeoEye chief operating officer, said, "Based upon the data we saw, the satellite is performing properly and ready to begin the next phase towards meeting its mission requirements." GeoEye-1 will now undergo a calibration and check-out period before imagery products will be available for sale.

Matthew O'Connell, GeoEye chief executive officer, said, "Later this fall, we will start providing high-resolution color imagery of the Earth from our newest satellite to customers around the globe. The imagery from GeoEye-1 adds to the quantity and quality of that currently provided by our IKONOS satellite, and together this magnificent constellation will enable us to meet world-wide customer demand."

GeoEye-1 is part of the NGA NextView program. The NextView program is designed to ensure that the NGA has access to commercial imagery in support of its mission to provide timely, relevant and accurate geospatial intelligence in support of national security. GeoEye won its USD500-million NextView contract in September 2004 and was able to build and launch GeoEye-1 without any contract cost overruns in less than four years after contract award.

GeoEye-1 will simultaneously collect 0.41-metre ground resolution black-and-white (panchromatic) images and 1.65-metre color (multispectral) images. Designed to take digital images of the Earth from 423 miles (681 kilometres) and moving at a speed of about four-and-a-half miles (seven kilometers) per second, the satellite camera can distinguish objects on the Earth's surface as small as 0.41-metre or 16 inches in size. Due to U.S. licensing restrictions, commercial customers will get access to imagery at half-meter ground resolution.

GeoEye-1 was built by General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems in Gilbert, Ariz. The imaging system was built by ITT in Rochester, NY. ITT is also building the imaging system for GeoEye-2 slated for launch in 2011. The 4310-pound satellite was launched at 11:50 a.m. PDT on a United Launch Alliance Delta II rocket from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The launch of GeoEye-1 marks the 83rd consecutive successful launch of the Delta II rocket.

(Image Courtesy: [Geoeye](#) )