



Rocket Lab Shatters Responsive Space Record: Launches U.S. Space Force VICTUS HAZE Mission in 16 Hours 42 Minutes

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- **Historic Speed:** Rocket Lab launched the VICTUS HAZE mission just 16 hours and 42 minutes after receiving the U.S. Space Force's Notice to Launch, beating the previous record by more than 10 hours and setting a new global standard in responsive space access.
- **End-to-End Space Capability:** Marking a major capability milestone for the Department of War, Rocket Lab delivered a complete turnkey solution for space-as-a-service: design, build, launch, and now 24/7 on orbit operations.
- **Rapid Operational Capability:** The spacecraft is now fully commissioned and conducting complex orbital maneuvers to chase down another spacecraft on orbit and conduct Rendezvous and Proximity Operations (RPO).

LONG BEACH, Calif., June 22, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Rocket Lab Corporation (Nasdaq: RKLB), a global leader in launch services and space systems, today announced it has successfully launched its Electron rocket and deployed its own Pioneer spacecraft for the U.S. Space Force (USSF) Space Systems Command's (SSC) VICTUS HAZE Tactically Responsive Space (TacRS) mission led by the SSC's Space Safari Program Office.

Lifting off from Rocket Lab Launch Complex 1 in New Zealand at 10:19 pm NZT on June 19th, the mission shattered the previous TacRS record set by [VICTUS NOX](#) by more than 10 hours. The feat establishes a new global benchmark for rapid call-up space capabilities.

Beyond this historic launch turnaround, VICTUS HAZE marks the first time a single prime contractor has provided an entire all-in-one mission as a complete package for a TacRS mission. Rocket Lab vertically engineered, built, and tested the highly maneuverable Pioneer spacecraft, executed the rapid launch, and is now managing on-orbit operations for VICTUS HAZE. Rocket Lab's Pioneer spacecraft is now conducting Rendezvous and Proximity Operations (RPO) in low Earth orbit, simulating a rapid threat-response scenario alongside a non-compliant satellite. With space an increasingly contested domain, the ability to rapidly launch a spacecraft, pursue an object in space, photograph it, and monitor its behavior in real time, gives the U.S. and its allies the Space Domain Awareness capability and the vital intelligence it needs to maintain U.S. superiority in space.

Key VICTUS HAZE Mission Achievements:

- **16 Hours, 42 Minutes (Notice-to-Launch):** The length of time between Rocket Lab receiving the Notice To Launch from the SSC's Space Safari Program Office and Electron's launch from Launch Complex 1.
- **4 Hours (Trajectory Calculation):** Rocket Lab's Guidance, Navigation, and Control (GNC) team took just ~4 hours to calculate final trajectories, update flight software, and coordinate global ground stations in preparation for launch.
- **37 Hours, 36 Minutes (Spacecraft Commissioning):** Rocket Lab fully activated and readied the Pioneer spacecraft for its first orbital maneuver, beating VICTUS HAZE's strict 72-hour deadline by more than 34 hours.

Rocket Lab founder and CEO, Sir Peter Beck, says: "Our launch-plus-spacecraft integrated mission capability is transformative for responsive space. By launching on demand with spacecraft at-the-ready we've shown we can secure and defend the nation's space interests rapidly, and that's a powerful capability for the United States and its allies. This is what modern space power looks like: the ability to reinforce and reimagine national security space architecture at will, and we're proud to be providing the nation with those next-generation space capabilities, today."

"We are excited to demonstrate advanced TacRS capabilities on orbit," said USSF Lt. Col. Lincoln Miller, Space Safari system program manager. "VICTUS HAZE culminates the TacRS 'crawl, walk, run' phase of on-orbit demonstrations. We are confident in the technology and space operations expertise of our teams who have paved the way for rapid capability delivery to orbit in support of urgent operational needs. Rendezvous and Proximity Operations on such short timelines are certainly not trivial,

Rocket Lab launches the VICTUS HAZE mission for the US Space Force



Rocket Lab's Electron rocket launches off the pad at Launch Complex 1 for the USSF's VICTUS HAZE mission with only 16 hours 42 minutes notice - a new launch record.

especially in a crisis or conflict scenario, but this demonstration of our ability to commission a complex and capable space vehicle within less than 72 hours, and immediately begin an RPO scenario thereafter, shows that we can field capability to deny adversaries first-mover advantage into novel orbits.”

The successful launch of VICTUS HAZE builds on Rocket Lab's extensive history of delivering responsive space missions, including a previous launch record in 2024 when Rocket Lab launched two Electron missions from two different hemispheres in less than 24 hours. This rapid and reliable launch cadence is unmatched by any other small launch provider globally.

Rocket Lab's ability to rapidly compress what is typically a multi-year defense acquisition timeline was made possible through the company's extensive vertical integration. The Pioneer spacecraft incorporates Rocket Lab's own in-house manufactured subsystems, including propulsion, solar arrays, reaction wheels, radio, star trackers, structures, propellant tanks, and flight software. This internal supply chain eliminates third-party delays, ensuring seamless compatibility and unmatched operational speed for the Department of War and its allies.

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About Rocket Lab

Rocket Lab is a leading space company providing launch services, spacecraft, payloads, and satellite components to commercial, government, and national security customers. Rocket Lab's Electron rocket is the world's most frequently launched orbital small rocket; its HASTE rocket provides hypersonic test launch capability for the U.S. government and allied nations; and its Neutron launch vehicle in development will unlock medium launch for constellation deployment, national security, and exploration missions. Rocket Lab is publicly listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange (RKLB). Learn more at www.rocketlabcorp.com

Forward Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. We intend such forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward-looking statements contained in Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act") and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"). All statements contained in this press release other than statements of historical fact, including, without limitation, statements regarding our launch and space systems operations, launch schedule and window, safe and repeatable access to space, Neutron development, operational expansion and business strategy, are forward-looking statements. The words "believe," "may," "will," "estimate," "potential," "continue," "anticipate," "intend," "expect," "strategy," "future," "could," "would," "project," "plan," "target," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, though not all forward-looking statements use these words or expressions. These statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including but not limited to the factors, risks and uncertainties included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025, as such factors may be updated from time to time in our other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), accessible on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov and the Investor Relations section of our website at <https://investors.rocketlabcorp.com> which could cause our actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the forward-looking statements made in this press release. Any such forward-looking statements represent management's estimates as of the date of this press release. While we may elect to update such forward-looking statements at some point in the future, we disclaim any obligation to do so, even if subsequent events cause our views to change.

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/af8e3246-3898-4451-ba51-cba120e74867>