Rocket Lab Wins Contract to Launch Orbital Debris Removal Demonstration Mission for Astroscale

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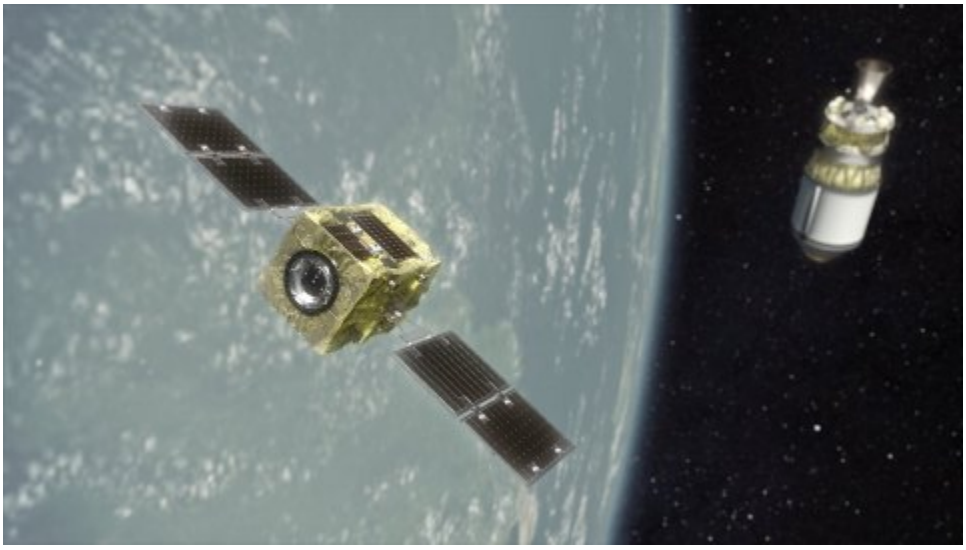
Electron's Kick Stage will enable an Astroscale satellite to rendezvous with a spent Japanese upper stage rocket body in low Earth orbit, demonstrating new debris removal technology for space sustainability

LONG BEACH, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Rocket Lab USA, Inc. (Nasdaq: RKLB) (“Rocket Lab” or “the Company”), a global leader in launch services and space systems, today announced it has signed a dedicated launch contract with Astroscale Japan Inc. (“Astroscale Japan”), a subsidiary of Astroscale Holdings Inc. (“Astroscale”), a market leader in satellite servicing and long-term orbital sustainability. Scheduled for lift-off from Rocket Lab Launch Complex 1 in 2023, the Electron rocket will launch the Active Debris Removal by Astroscale-Japan (ADRAS-J) satellite, which has been selected by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) for Phase I of its Commercial Removal of Debris Demonstration Project (CRD2), one of the world’s first technology demonstrations of removing large-scale debris from orbit.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20210921006058/en/



Render of Astroscale's ADRAS-J satellite, to be launched by Rocket Lab's Electron launch vehicle. (Photo: Business Wire)

Once deployed to a precise orbit by Electron’s Kick Stage, the ADRAS-J satellite is designed to rendezvous with a piece of orbital debris, a long abandoned upper stage rocket body. ADRAS-J aims to demonstrate proximity operations and obtain images of the rocket body, delivering observational data to better understand the debris environment. A planned second phase of the mission, which has yet to be competed, intends to demonstrate the de-orbit of the debris.

“The ability to actively remove satellites and debris from orbit at the end of their operational life will likely play a key role in ensuring a sustainable space environment for the future, so we’re delighted to enable Astroscale to demonstrate new and innovative solutions in this field,” said Rocket Lab Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Peter Beck. “Rendezvousing with a piece of debris on orbit, travelling at around 27,000 km per hour, is a highly complex task that requires absolute precision when it comes to orbital deployment. Electron’s Kick Stage has demonstrated this precision across 18 missions, providing in-space transportation to place our customers’ satellites exactly where they need to go.”

“Reliable and commercially viable launch vehicles like Rocket Lab’s Electron rocket enable frequent and flexible access to space, allowing us to advance our on-orbit services which are fundamental to the growth of the space infrastructure and economy,” said Nobu Okada, Founder and CEO of Astroscale. “Rocket Lab and Astroscale have become leaders in our respective markets and I am thrilled to collaborate on ADRAS-J, a ground breaking mission that will shape the technologies and policies needed to drive space sustainability forward.”

A visualization of the ADRAS-J mission can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/5u_X33krhHY

About Rocket Lab

Founded in 2006, Rocket Lab is an end-to-end space company with an established track record of mission success. We deliver reliable launch services, spacecraft components, satellites and other spacecraft and on-orbit management solutions that make it faster, easier and more affordable to access space. Headquartered in Long Beach, California, Rocket Lab designs and manufactures the Electron small orbital launch vehicle and the Photon satellite platform and is developing the Neutron 8-ton

payload class launch vehicle. Since its first orbital launch in January 2018, Rocket Lab's Electron launch vehicle has become the second most frequently launched U.S. rocket annually and has delivered 105 satellites to orbit for private and public sector organizations, enabling operations in national security, scientific research, space debris mitigation, Earth observation, climate monitoring, and communications. Rocket Lab's Photon spacecraft platform has been selected to support NASA missions to the Moon and Mars, as well as the first private commercial mission to Venus. Rocket Lab has three launch pads at two launch sites, including two launch pads at a private orbital launch site located in New Zealand, one of which is currently operational, and a second launch site in Virginia, USA which is expected to become operational by the end of 2021. To learn more, visit www.rocketlabusa.com.

About Astroscale

Astroscale is the first private company with a vision to secure the safe and sustainable development of space for the benefit of future generations, and the only company solely dedicated to on-orbit servicing across all orbits. Founded in 2013, Astroscale is developing innovative and scalable solutions across the spectrum of on-orbit servicing missions, including life extension, in-situ space situational awareness, end-of-life services, and active debris removal, to create sustainable space systems and mitigate the growing and hazardous buildup of debris in space. Astroscale is also defining business cases and working with government and commercial stakeholders to develop norms, regulations, and incentives for the responsible use of space. Headquartered in Japan, Astroscale has an international presence with subsidiaries in the United Kingdom, the United States, Israel, and Singapore. Astroscale is a rapidly expanding venture company, working to advance safe and sustainable growth in space and solve a growing environmental concern. Find out more about Astroscale at www.astroscale.com.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release may contain certain "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. These forward-looking statements, including without limitation expectations regarding the timing of scheduled launches, are based on Rocket Lab's current expectations and beliefs concerning future developments and their potential effects. These forward-looking statements involve a number of risks, uncertainties (many of which are beyond Rocket Lab's control), or other assumptions that may cause actual results or performance to be materially different from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Many factors could cause actual future events to differ materially from the forward-looking statements in this press release, including risks related to the global COVID-19 pandemic, including risks related to government restrictions and lock-downs in New Zealand and other countries in which we operate that could delay or suspend our operations; delays and disruptions in expansion efforts; our dependence on a limited number of customers; the harsh and unpredictable environment of space in which our products operate which could adversely affect our launch vehicle and spacecraft; increased congestion from the proliferation of low Earth orbit constellations which could materially increase the risk of potential collision with space debris or another spacecraft and limit or impair our launch flexibility and/or access to our own orbital slots; increased competition in our industry due in part to rapid technological development and decreasing costs; technological change in our industry which we may not be able to keep up with or which may render our services uncompetitive; average selling price trends; failure of our satellites to operate as intended either due to our error in design in production or through no fault of our own; launch schedule disruptions; supply chain disruptions, product delays or failures; design and engineering flaws; launch failures; natural disasters and epidemics or pandemics; changes in governmental regulations including with respect to trade and export restrictions, or in the status of our regulatory approvals or applications; or other events that force us to cancel or reschedule launches, including customer contractual rescheduling and termination rights, and the other risks detailed from time to time in Rocket Lab's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission under the heading "Risk Factors" and elsewhere (including that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic may also exacerbate the risks discussed therein). There can be no assurance that the future developments affecting Rocket Lab will be those that we have anticipated. Except as required by law, Rocket Lab is not undertaking any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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