

SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS (D2)
Launch Vehicles in Service or in Development (1)

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LAUNCHER ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

Abstract

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ESA's Directorate of Launchers has in the past 10 years increased its range of activities from management of mainly one single programme, Ariane, with an important programme part delegated to CNES, to today's situation where the technical and financial management of a range of programmes is ensured directly by ESA. This paper gives an overview and detailed technical content of most significant recent achievements of activities presently undertaken by ESA, such as monitoring and maintaining the qualification status of operational launch systems, i.e. Ariane-5 ECA and ES, complementary development of Ariane, development of VEGA, development of Soyuz At CSG, and Future Launcher Preparatory Programme (FLPP). In addition to the presently undertaken programmes a continuous activity of maintaining in operational conditions the European Space Port, CSG in French Guyana, and ESA assets used for the exploitation of Ariane is undertaken. The paper concludes with a view to future evolutions of ESA's launcher activities.