

IAF SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (D2)
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THE FINAL QUALIFICATION OF THE ARIANE 6 LAUNCH PAD

Abstract

CNES has built up 50 years of expertise dedicated to launchers for the development of ground launch equipment in French Guiana. On the strength of this expertise, unique throughout Europe, in late 2014 ESA has entrusted CNES with the development of the launch base for the new Ariane 6 launcher that the CNES called Launch Complex 4 or ELA4. This is the ninth launch complex developed by CNES. There are already 3 Operational Launch Complexes on the site of the Guiana Space Centre: the ELA3 for Ariane 5, the ELS for the Soyuz launcher and the ZLV for the Vega launcher. The main objective of the Ariane 6 program is to reduce launch costs by 50%. After a quick description of the ELA4, this paper will present the first results of the qualification tests of this new launch pad and the way forward to the final qualification. The qualification tests started mid of 2019 with the mechanical tests and will be ended with a final chronology simulation end of 2020. The good results of these tests will allow us to receive the launcher mock-up. A real launch campaign will be performed and a 500s firing test will conclude the qualification of the launch pad ELA4 and the Ariane 6 launcher.