

Please Note:

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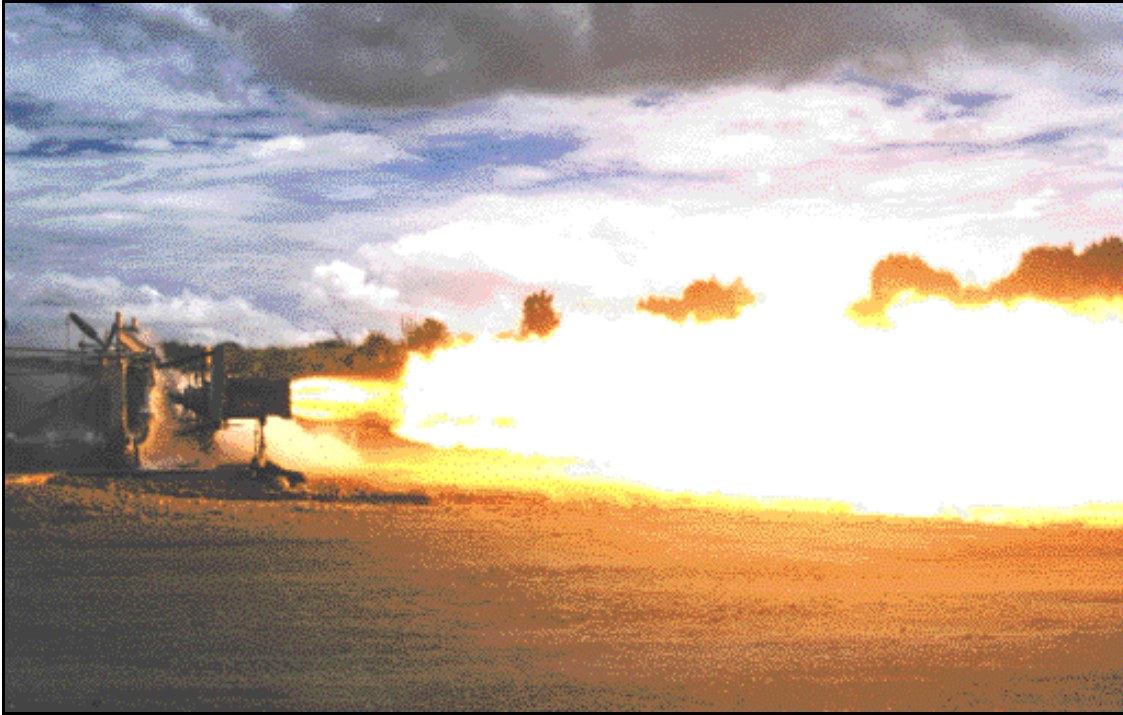
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40,000 lb Engine Test

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Microcosm has successfully completed the first five firings of a 40,000 lb force test engine as a part of the ultra-low-cost engine development program for the Scorpius family of low-cost launch vehicles. The initial test program is characterizing a new injector being designed for the Scorpius program by TRW, Inc. Testing was done at the Energetic Materials Research Test Center (EMRTC) Rocket Test Site in Sacorro, NM.

A 5,000 lb thrust engine has been built, qualified for flight, and will make its inaugural test flight on a SR-S suborbital vehicle to be launched from White Sands Missile Test Range in September. A larger vehicle using three of the 5,000 lb engines will be launched in early 1999. More than 25 of the 5,000 lb thrust engines have been built and tested at a cost of less than \$5,000 each, exclusive of the injector. A 20,000 lb thrust engine has been built and is scheduled for testing later this summer.

The objective of the Scorpius program is to reduce the near-term launch cost by a factor of 5 to 10. The Scorpius program manager is Dr. Robert Conger. Test director is Ken Mason. The program is managed and technically supported by the Air Force Research Lab, Space Vehicles Directorate; the government program manager is Ken Hampsten. Funding for the Scorpius program has been provided through Microcosm internal R&D and by contracts with the Air Force, NASA, and BMDO. According to Microcosm President, Dr. James Wertz, "The test of the larger engines represents the beginning of a validation program showing that the Scorpius low-cost design can be scaled to larger vehicles. We are appreciative of the work of TRW in helping bring this about and are anxious to continue testing all of the components on a larger scale."