

The U.S. Air Force's X-37B space plane completed its fifth mission, OTV-5, landing after a record 780 days in orbit. Launched on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket in 2017, OTV-5 broke the previous X-37B mission record of 718 days. The space plane, built by Boeing, has a miniature payload bay for experiments and satellites. OTV-5 carried classified experiments and smaller satellites, including the Air Force Research Laboratory's Advanced Structurally Embedded Thermal Spreader. It also flew to a higher-inclination orbit than previous flights. The X-37B program, originally a NASA project, aims to test spacecraft technologies. The successful landing of OTV-5 demonstrates the importance of reusable spaceplanes for advancing space capabilities.