MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

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Multiple Kill Vehicle-L Calibrated for Success

On April 16, 2008 at the Space Dynamics Laboratory in North Logan, Utah, the Multiple Kill Vehicle team completed calibration of the pathfinder carrier vehicle seeker. Completion of pathfinder seeker calibration is a major milestone along the way to develop new technology required for target tracking and discrimination for the Multiple Kill Vehicle program. Completion of this milestone is the culmination of a multi-year effort to develop telescopes, structures, electronics, and software to meet the challenging requirements of mid-course threat sensing.

With successful calibration of the pathfinder seeker accomplished, the Multiple Kill Vehicle team is now building two additional seekers, each with a new technology infrared focal plane. Focal plane development is nearing completion with deliveries anticipated in June and July. The team will complete calibration of these two seekers by the end of December 2008, retiring the remaining technology risk for mid-course threat sensing. In 2009, one of these seekers will fly on an airplane to sense missile targets of opportunity in a flight environment.

The Missile Defense Agency-led seeker development team includes Lockheed Martin, BAE, Utah State University, the Naval Research Lab, MIT Lincoln Labs, Raytheon Vision Systems, and DRS Technologies. Lockheed Martin is the system integrator, BAE provides telescopes and other equipment, Utah State University provides calibration chambers and infrastructure, and the Naval Research Lab and MIT Lincoln Labs provided a pathfinder seeker focal plane and supporting electronics. Raytheon Vision Systems and DRS Technologies will each provide 512x512 HgCdTe focal planes for the next two seekers.

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