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Missile Defense Agency Receives Joint Meritorious Unit Award

Lieutenant General Henry "Trey" Obering III, Missile Defense Agency director, announced today the Agency has been awarded the Department of Defense Joint Meritorious Unit Award for its role this past February in shooting down a failed satellite that posed a potential safety hazard.

The citation accompanying the award stated that "In an effort to minimize debris hazards in space, aircraft and the populace," the citation continued, "countless hours of analysis were required to determine the feasibility of engagement and select the optimal location and altitude." A multitude of military, civilian and contractor personnel, with the MDA, Defense Department, the U.S. Navy and associated industry and academia, came together and within a six week period, planned and executed the Presidential directive to bring down the errant satellite.

A direct hit to the satellite by a modified Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) launched from the *USS Lake Erie (CG 70)*, ruptured the hydrazine tank and eliminated the toxic hazards posed to human life. In fact, as noted in reading from the citation, General Obering said, "within five days of the shot, a vast majority of the debris had already burned up in the atmosphere and there have been no reports of debris impacting the earth."

"The efforts of these great people," said the Director, "speaks to the expertise of the MDA and brings great credit to themselves and the Department of Defense."

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