



Archive

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## **Aegis Missile Defense Flight Test Successful**

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and the U.S. Navy announced today the completion of a successful flight test in the continuing development of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Program, the sea-based element of the Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). Flight Mission-6 (FM-6) involved the detection and tracking of an Aries medium-range target missile launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Kauai, Hawaii at 8:10am HST (1:10pm EST). Approximately two minutes after target launch, a developmental Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) was launched from the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense cruiser the USS LAKE ERIE (CG 70). Approximately two minutes later the SM-3 successfully intercepted the target missile with "hit to kill" technology, using only the force of the direct collision to destroy the target. This was the fourth successful intercept for Aegis BMD and SM-3.

After the target was launched, the Aegis destroyer the USS RUSSELL, located near the island of Kauai, detected the target and reported the target track to the USS LAKE ERIE, located further out to sea. Outfitted with Aegis BMD equipment and computer program configuration, the USS LAKE ERIE acquired and tracked the target with its AN/SPY-1 radar and developed a fire control solution. The crew of the USS LAKE ERIE then launched the SM-3 missile. The Aegis Weapon System guided the first, second and third stages of the SM-3 to a position to perform an intercept of the target. After ejection from the SM-3 third stage, the Kinetic Warhead acquired, tracked and diverted directly into the target at an altitude of 137 kilometers, and at a closing speed of approximately 3.7 kilometers per second.

This test was another step forward in the development and test program leading to the integration of Aegis BMD into the "layered" missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy all types of ballistic missiles during any phase of flight – boost, midcourse and terminal. A primary objective for this test was to evaluate the performance of long-range surveillance and track support from an Aegis cruiser and destroyer team that has the potential for use with a number of different missile defense elements, including the Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) designed to protect the United States against long-range ballistic missiles. Extensive post-test analysis will be conducted to evaluate the performance of the entire system as tested, and will provide the data necessary to prepare for future flight tests and to aid in the continuing development program to ensure the United States will be able to defend our homeland, deployed forces and our friends and allies against ballistic missiles of all ranges.

Conducted by Navy personnel, FM-6 is the fourth of a six flight test series within the 2004-2005 time period (called Block 2004) to develop a sea-based ballistic missile defense against short-to-medium range ballistic missiles. FM-6 is the third developmental flight test against more complex, stressing and operationally realistic ballistic missile engagement scenarios. Future tests will continue to increase operational realism.

MDA, in cooperation with the Navy, manages the Aegis BMD Program. Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems and Sensors, Moorestown, N.J. is the prime contractor for the Aegis Weapon System and Vertical Launch System installed in Aegis cruisers and destroyers. Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, Ariz., is the prime contractor for the SM-3 missile.

