



News Release

7100 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-7100

07-NEWS-0037

22 June 2007

Sea-Based Missile Defense “Hit to Kill” Intercept Achieved

Lieutenant General Henry A. ‘Trey’ Obering, Missile Defense Agency (MDA) director, announced the successful completion today of MDA’s latest “hit to kill” intercept flight test conducted jointly with the U.S. Navy off the coast of Kauai, Hawaii. This was the 28th successful intercept in 36 missile defense tests since 2001.

The test involved a “separating” target, meaning that the target warhead separated from its booster rocket. The event, designated as Flight Test Standard Missile -12 (FTM-12), marked the ninth successful intercept in eleven flight tests for the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Program, the sea-based component of the Agency’s Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS), designed to intercept and destroy short to medium-range ballistic missiles. All target launches managed by the Missile Defense Agency’s Targets and Countermeasures directorate to support the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System have been successful.

This flight mission was the third intercept involving a separating target and the first time an Aegis BMD-equipped destroyer was used to launch the interceptor missile. The USS Decatur (DDG 73), using the operationally-certified Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Weapon System (BMD 3.6) and the Standard Missile – 3 (SM-3) Block IA missile successfully intercepted the target during its midcourse phase of flight.

At approximately 4:40 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time (10:40 p.m. EDT), a medium-range ballistic missile with a separating target was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Barking Sands, Kauai, Hawaii. USS Decatur’s Aegis BMD Weapon System detected and tracked the target and developed a fire control solution.

Approximately four minutes later, the USS Decatur’s crew launched the SM-3, and two minutes later the missile successfully intercepted the target warhead outside the earth’s atmosphere more than 100 miles above the Pacific Ocean and 250 miles northwest of Kauai. The intercept used “hit to kill” technology, meaning that the target warhead was destroyed when the missile collided directly with the target, using no explosives.

An Aegis cruiser, USS Port Royal (CG 73), a Spanish frigate, MÉNDEZ NÚÑEZ (F-104), and MDA’s Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) mobile ground-based radar also participated in the flight test. USS Port Royal used the flight test to support development of the new Aegis BMD SPY-1B radar signal processor, collecting performance data on its increased target detection and discrimination capabilities. MÉNDEZ NÚÑEZ, stationed off Kauai, performed long-range surveillance and track operations as a training event to assess the future capabilities of the F-100 Class. The THAAD radar tracked the target and exchanged tracking data with the Aegis BMD cruiser.

This event marked the third time that an allied military unit participated in a U.S. Aegis BMD test, with warships from Japan and the Netherlands participating in earlier tests. Japan has committed to deploying SM-3 interceptor missiles aboard its Aegis ships, and is also working with the United States to develop a sea-based interceptor with more advanced capabilities.

MDA and the U.S. Navy cooperatively manage the Aegis BMD Program. Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems and Sensors of Moorestown, New Jersey is the Combat System Engineering Agent (CSEA) and prime contractor for the Aegis BMD Weapon System and Vertical Launch System installed in Aegis-equipped cruisers and destroyers. Raytheon Missile Systems of Tucson, Arizona is the prime contractor for the SM-3 missile and all previous variants of Standard Missile.

Media contacts are Chris Taylor, MDA Public Affairs, at (703) 901-9476 (cell)/(808) 335-4740 (PMRF) and Rick Lehner, MDA Public Affairs, at (703) 697-8997. Photos are available at (MDA and Navy Region Hawaii) websites. Post event video will be available 2:00 to 3:00 a.m. (EDT), KuBand satellite Galaxy 10R, K23 B/W 27 MHz Analog, Frequency 14460.0H, DL Frequency 12160.0V. Trouble uplink 954-258-8986