



09-FYI-0001

April 13, 2009

Kinetic Energy Interceptor Prepares for Flight Testing with Simulated Launch Countdown

The Missile Defense Agency successfully completed an important exercise of the Kinetic Energy Interceptors (KEI) program in preparation for its inaugural flight test later this year. Team members executed simulated launch countdown activities of an inert pathfinder Kinetic Energy Interceptor (KEI) booster vehicle on April 9, 2009, at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., as a risk reduction effort for the first flight test of the high-acceleration vehicle.

The KEI pathfinder missile, fully functional with the exception of inert motors, was tested with range instrumentation, launch operations personnel and launch procedures. This pathfinder vehicle test has validated launch operations activities in preparation for flight testing.

KEI is designed to be a mobile, globally deployable missile defense system featuring MDA's newest high-acceleration booster. KEI will provide the Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS) with a capability to defeat long-range ballistic missiles during the boost, ascent, and midcourse phases of flight. By engaging hostile missiles in early stages of flight, KEI increases intercept opportunities and enhances the BMDS layered defensive capability.

The KEI program is managed by the Missile Defense Agency in Washington, D.C., and executed by the KEI Project Office in Huntsville, Ala.

Media Contacts: Rick Lehner, (703) 697-8997, Richard.lehner@mda.mil; or Pam Rogers, (256) 450-1421, Pamela.rogers@mda.mil