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Navy Area Theater Ballistic Missile Defense Program Completes Second Flight Test of the SM-2 Block IVA Missile

The U.S. Navy moved another step closer to Navy AREA Theater Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) capability with the second successful test flight of the Standard Missile 2 (SM-2), Block IVA in two months., both at the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR). The flight, designated "Control Test Vehicle Two" (CTV-2), evaluated the SM-2 Block IVA flight performance envelope and provided engineers with missile guidance, autopilot and stability data to ensure Navy AREA TBMD compatibility.

The test flight took place at 10:50 a.m. (EDT) over the central portion of WSMR. The CTV-2, SM-2 Block IVA test round, was launched from the WSMR "Desert Ship" out of a land based Vertical Launch System and flew a pre-programmed trajectory within the boundaries of the national range. The test was strictly an evaluation of flight performance and did not require a target. Program engineers will analyze the data from this Control Test Vehicle flight as they did with the June 29th Control Test Vehicle flight, and incorporate their findings, as required, into the missile design.

Today's test was the second in a planned series of eight engineering and manufacturing development test flights. The Navy AREA TBMD Program's ground test program has already completed significant testing to validate lethality projections and to evaluate how the infrared seeker and the forward looking fuse will function during future WSMR test flights, which will be conducted with targets. Once the engineering and manufacturing developmental flight-test series at WSMR is complete, the program will conduct technical and operational evaluations at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Kauai, HI in 2002.

The Navy AREA TBMD Program builds upon the well-proven SM-2 missile family and the Aegis Weapon System, including its vertical launch capability. Both Aegis and other variants of the SM-2 missile are currently on over fifty Aegis cruisers and destroyers, with twenty-nine more in the production pipeline. The SM-2 Block IVA missile maintains the capabilities of earlier variants of the SM-2 missile while adding a TBMD capability. The primary mission of the Navy AREA TBMD system will be to defend our troops and to protect coastal airfields and seaports, critical assets, population centers and large geographic regions against tactical ballistic missile attack.

The Ballistic Missile Defense Organization and the Navy are co-sponsors in the development of a Navy TBMD capability. The Navy's Program Executive Officer for Theater Surface Combatants manages the Navy's AREA TBMD Program. Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, AZ, is the prime contractor for the development and production of the SM-2 Block IVA missile. Lockheed Martin Naval Electronic and Surveillance Systems manufactures the Aegis Weapon System installed onboard Aegis cruisers and destroyers and is the prime contractor for Vertical Launch Systems.