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Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) Maneuvering System Successfully Tested

Air Force Lieutenant General Henry "Trey" Obering III, Missile Defense Agency Director, announced that the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense program conducted a successful ground test of the upgraded 'Pulse Mode' of the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3) sea-based missile's Solid Divert Attitude and Control System (SDACS) on March 29, 2007.

The test, conducted at Alliant Techsystems in Elkton, Md., was the fourth successful ground test for the upgraded SDACS. This final ground test, if subsequent data analysis turns out to be as positive as the initial results indicate, will provide for the insertion of this 'Pulse Mode' capability into the SM-3 Block IA missile this summer.

The advanced SDACS 'Pulse Mode' design adds additional thrust and maneuvering capabilities to the SM-3's Kinetic Warhead, which, after launch from an Aegis BMD cruiser or destroyer with a missile defense capability, is designed to place itself in the path of a hostile ballistic missile, colliding directly with the target to destroy it using "hit to kill" technology.

During the recent ground test, simulated flight control commands were sent to the SDACS to evaluate pulse mode performance requirements and design effectiveness. Preliminary analysis indicates that all test objectives were achieved.

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