



Archive

July 28, 1999

THAAD's Eleventh Flight Test

The Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system flight test 11 (FT-11) was postponed due to excessive high altitude winds which could carry intercept debris beyond White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) boundaries. The high wind conditions do not affect the flight of the THAAD interceptor or operation of the other THAAD system components. The THAAD missile and Hera target are ready to fly, however the planned test date is weather dependent. Current weather forecasts indicate unfavorable winds will probably complicate any planned test over the next few days. Sounding rockets are being flown daily to assess weather conditions in support of the flight test. Wind data is processed through a WSMR Range Safety model, which is currently predicting that debris will be carried off the range due to high upper level winds.

The flight test will use a more complex target set than earlier tests with multiple objects (reentry vehicle, missile booster, and associated objects) and will attempt an intercept in the exoatmosphere (in excess of 60 miles above the earth). THAAD must select the correct target for intercept. This will be the 11th test in a series of 13 flight tests currently planned in the Program Definition and Risk Reduction phase of the development of the THAAD system.