



Archive

November 21, 2002

## **Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Flight Test Successful**

The Missile Defense Agency and the U.S. Navy announced today a successful flight test in the continuing development of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense element of the Ballistic Missile Defense System. Flight Mission-4 (FM-4) involved the firing of a developmental Standard Missile 3 (SM-3) from the Aegis ballistic missile defense cruiser USS LAKE ERIE (CG-70) to engage a ballistic missile target launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on the island of Kauai, Hawaii.

The target was launched at 2:30 p.m. (HST)/ 7:30 p.m. (EST). The USS LAKE ERIE equipped with Aegis BMD computer programs and equipment, developed a fire control solution without any external sensor inputs. Within two minutes after target launch, USS LAKE ERIE's Aegis Weapon System fired the SM-3 guided missile. Approximately two minutes later, the missile's Kinetic Warhead acquired, tracked, and diverted into the target, demonstrating the Aegis BMD system's capability to engage the ballistic missile target in the ascent phase. This was the third consecutive target intercept flight, demonstrating Aegis BMD system robustness.

The primary objective of this test was to demonstrate the Aegis BMD system capability to intercept the ballistic missile target in the ascent phase of flight. Extensive engineering evaluation data was collected for analyses in preparation for future flight tests. Project officials will evaluate the data and incorporate changes as required.

With the success of the FM-3 flight test on June 13, 2002, the Aegis BMD project has accelerated its flight-testing objectives. FM-4 marks the beginning of a six flight test series to develop an emergency deployment sea based ballistic missile defense against short to medium range ballistic missiles. FM-4 is the first developmental flight test against more complex and stressing ballistic missile engagement scenarios. An extensive ground test program had already conducted successful testing of elements of the Aegis BMD system. Air defense variants of the Standard Missile are currently at sea in over 50 Aegis cruisers and destroyers, with more than 25 additional ships in the production/planned pipeline.

MDA and the Navy manage the Aegis BMD Project. Raytheon Missile Systems, Tucson, Ariz., is the prime contractor for the development of the SM-3 missile. Lockheed Martin Naval Electronic and Surveillance Systems, Moorestown, N.J. manages the development of the Aegis Weapon System installed in Aegis cruisers and destroyers.