



04-FYI-0040

13 December 2004

First Interceptor for Homeland Defense Emplaced at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

The Missile Defense Agency and the Air Force's 30th Space Wing have announced that the first of two interceptor missiles designed to intercept and destroy a long-range ballistic missile was emplaced Dec. 10 into its underground silo at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. Plans call for the second interceptor to be emplaced later this month.

Six interceptors have been emplaced at Ft. Greely, Alaska, with up to 10 additional interceptors planned for emplacement at the site next year. Vandenberg AFB will serve as an operational site with its two interceptors, as well as an important location for operationally realistic testing.

The interceptors are part of an integrated system of sensors, ground and sea-based radars and an advanced command and control, battle management and communication system designed to detect, track and launch an interceptor to destroy a target warhead before it can reach its intended target in any of our 50 states. When the system becomes operational in the near future, it will mark the first time the United States will have the capability to defend the entire country against a limited attack by a long-range ballistic missile

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