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Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System Successfully Tracks Targets During Test

Air Force Lt. General Henry "Trey" Obering, Missile Defense Agency director, announced that the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) Radar, integrated with the THAAD command, control, battle management and communications system, acquired and tracked two Orion missile targets flying separate, inbound tactical ballistic flight profiles at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. on June 17, 2005. The THAAD equipment was operated by air defense artillery soldiers from Fort Bliss, Texas. This test represents a confidence-building milestone leading to fully integrated developmental flight testing of the THAAD system later this year.

The test demonstrated successfully the integration of the radar and command and control system against live targets. During the flight of the first target, the radar acquired, tracked and classified both the inbound expended booster and the separated re-entry vehicle through a single-stage separation event. Using track data provided by the radar, the command, control, battle management and communications system conducted threat assessment, object tasking and engagement planning, launched a simulated interceptor and provided acquisition and intercept support plan data to the radar. During the second target launch the THAAD radar acquired, tracked and classified an inbound unitary missile. This was the eighth test of the radar tracking a tactical ballistic missile target. The radar tracked the targets until they exited its field of view in both events. All test objectives were met.

The THAAD radar, the largest, most powerful mobile radar in the world, is capable of search, self-queuing, threat detection and object classification at extremely long ranges. It communicates with the THAAD interceptor missile to provide in-flight target updates. The THAAD command, control, battle management and communications system is designed to provide the planning, control, coordination and communications to fulfill the THAAD mission.



Photo Caption: The Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) X-band Radar, shown at White Sands Missile Range. The radar a key component of the system, which also includes the launcher, intercepting missile, and the command, control, battle management and communications platform.