



For Your Information

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THAAD Equipment Arrives in Hawaii

Air Force Lt. General Henry "Trey" Obering, Missile Defense Agency (MDA) director, announces the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system is nearer to its next phase of testing with the recent arrival of THAAD equipment at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Hawaii.

The move of equipment began from White Sands Missile Range, NM, shortly after the latest THAAD test last month. Soldiers of the HQ/A 1-6 Air Defense Artillery from Fort Bliss, Texas, moved the equipment by road to Biggs Army Airfield at Fort Bliss and there prepared for loading onto four C-17 aircraft. The move was intended to emulate as much as possible an actual tactical move of equipment and was the first time such a move has been done.

Prior to the equipment move the soldiers practiced march-order, emplacement and aircraft loading procedures on training devices and C-17 aircraft mockups. The actual move provided them valuable insight and knowledge of the nuances involved in march-ordering the equipment during an airlift operation and demonstrated the tactical deployment capability of the THAAD system.

Equipment was unloaded, after arriving at PMRF, and preparations are beginning for the first flight test to be held there in early 2007. White Sands Missile Range has been home to THAAD testing since the early 1990s and will continue to play a role in THAAD ground testing and training. The last flight test of THAAD at WSMR will be a missile fly-out with no target involved, scheduled for late 2006.

Testing at PMRF will allow for more robust test scenarios against missiles launched from sea-based platforms and the location in the Pacific Ocean means there will no longer be a need for the now-characteristic THAAD Energy Management System (TEMS) maneuver, or "corkscrew," that the missile has made as it comes out of the launcher. That maneuver was required strictly because of space limitations at White Sands and will not be a part of the flight trajectory at PMRF.

THAAD is the first missile defense system with both endo-atmospheric (inside earth's atmosphere) and exo-atmospheric (outside the atmosphere) capability developed specifically to defend against short to intermediate-range ballistic missiles. The THAAD element will provide upper-tier defense in the terminal segment of MDA's integrated Ballistic Missile Defense System, which means that it is designed to destroy ballistic missiles during the terminal, or final, phase of flight. The Ballistic Missile Defense System is designed to provide an integrated, "layered" defense of the United States, our deployed forces, allies and friends against ballistic missile threats of all ranges, in all phases of flight—boost, midcourse and terminal. Like the Patriot, THAAD has excellent mobility, and can be transported aboard ships or aircraft to wherever it is needed.

The THAAD Program is managed by the Missile Defense Agency in Washington, D.C. and executed by the THAAD Project Office in Huntsville, Ala. Lockheed Martin Corporation is the prime contractor.

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