



News Release

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Missile Defense Test Results in Successful "Hit To Kill" Intercept

Air Force Lieutenant General Henry "Trey" Obering, Missile Defense Agency (MDA) director, announced the successful completion today of an important missile defense "hit to kill" intercept test conducted jointly with the U.S. Navy off the coast of Kauai, Hawaii. The test involved the launch of a Standard Missile 3 (SM-3 Block IA) from the USS Shiloh, an Aegis-class cruiser, modified to perform the ballistic missile defense mission, and a hit to kill intercept of a "separating" target, meaning that the target warhead separated from its booster rocket. It was the seventh successful intercept test involving the sea-based component of the nation's ballistic missile defense system in eight attempts. "Hit to kill" technology uses only the direct collision of the interceptor missile with the target, totally destroying the target using only kinetic energy from the force of the collision.

"We are continuing to see great success with the very challenging technology of hit-to-kill, a technology that is used for all of our missile defense ground and sea-based interceptor missiles," said General Obering.

At approximately 12 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time (6 p.m. EDT), a target missile was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, Barking Sands, Kauai, Hawaii. USS Shiloh's Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense 3.6 Weapon System detected and tracked the target and developed a fire control solution. This was the USS Shiloh's first missile defense test since completing the necessary modifications and upgrades to its SPY-1 radar and advanced communications system to make it capable of serving as a sea-based missile defense platform. It was also the first time the new weapon system configuration, ballistic missile defense 3.6, and a new missile configuration were used during the intercept mission.

Approximately four minutes later, the USS Shiloh's crew fired the SM-3, and two minutes later the missile successfully intercepted the target warhead outside the earth's atmosphere more than 100 miles above the Pacific Ocean and 250 miles northwest of Kauai.

Three Aegis destroyers also participated in the flight test. One Aegis destroyer, equipped with a modified version of the Aegis ballistic missile defense weapon system, linked with a land-based missile defense radar to evaluate the ability of the ship's missile defense system to receive and utilize target cueing data via the missile defense system's command, control, battle management and communications architecture. Two other Aegis destroyers, including one from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, stationed off Kauai performed long-range surveillance and track exercises. This data can also be used to provide targeting information for other missile defense systems, including the ground-based long-range interceptor missiles now deployed in Alaska and California to protect all 50 states from a limited ballistic missile attack. Another U.S. Navy Aegis cruiser used the flight test to support development of a SPY-1B radar modified by the addition of a new signal processor, collecting performance data on its increased target detection and discrimination capabilities.

This event marked the first time that an allied military unit participated in a U.S. Aegis missile defense intercept test.

MDA and the U.S. Navy cooperatively manage the Aegis BMD Program. Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems and Sensors of Moorestown, New Jersey is the Combat System Engineering Agent (CSEA) and prime contractor for the Aegis BMD Weapon System and Vertical Launch System installed in Aegis-equipped cruisers and destroyers. Raytheon Missile Systems of Tucson, Arizona is the prime contractor for the SM-3 missile and all previous variants of Standard Missile.

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KuBand satellite Galaxy 10R, K23 36 MHz Analog, Frequency 14460.0H, DL Frequency 12160.0V. Trouble uplink 678-313-6001.

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