Targets and Countermeasures

The Targets and Countermeasures (TC) program develops quality, threat representative and cost effective target solutions enabling the Missile Defense System to test system performance and demonstrate its effectiveness in threat relevant environments.

Overview
- TC oversees the design, development, production, integration, delivery and launch execution of threat-representative, reliable, and cost-effective missile targets and countermeasures for the Missile Defense System.
- Target quality, reliability, and affordability have continued to be fundamental initiatives as the complexity and pace of threat development and missile defense testing increases.
- From January 2010 to October 2023, TC executed over 25 different target types in 99 flight tests with 95 success, representing a 96% success rate.

Details
Target systems include launch vehicles, payloads (including surrogate re-entry vehicles and countermeasures), launch support equipment, extensive instrumentation, and flight control stations.
- **Short-Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBM)** (up to 1000km): The SRBM Target class consists of Type (T)4 Subscale Targets, Pathfinder Zombies and Black Daggers.
- **Medium-Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBM)** (1000-3000km): The MRBM T1 and T2 targets are the same design where the T1 provides a simple 1000-1700 km target. T2 provides the ability to create a more complex scene for Missile Defense System testing. The T3 is a specialty target in this range class and is designed to replicate a specific threat. In addition to MRBM T1-3, the Agency also has the Subscale MRBM T4 to meet some of the medium range requirements and a T5 advanced target.
- **Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM) and Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM)** Intermediate (3000-4500km) and Intercontinental (>5500km): The IRBM Type 1 is a two-stage, air launched target. The IRBM Type 2 provides the ability to create a more complex scene for Missile Defense System testing. The ICBM T1 is a ground-launched three-stage target and the ICBM T2 provides the ability to create a more complex scene for Missile Defense System testing.
- **Modified Ballistic Re-Entry Vehicle and Countermeasures**: TC develops cost-effective Modified Ballistic Re-Entry Vehicles in several different varieties and multiple configurations of countermeasure solutions with systematic rigor leading to delivery of timely, quality products in support of the TC family of Launch Vehicles for Missile Defense System testing.

Summary
The role of the Targets and Countermeasures Program is to develop and provide threat-relevant targets for Missile Defense System testing. With an increased focus on leveraging industry’s existing products and developments for Targets and Countermeasures, MDA will draw on currently available and future technologies to provide reliable threat-relevant targets to demonstrate the Missile Defense System capability.