

Lockheed Martin Conducts Successful MLRS M270A1 And ATACMS Block IA Tests

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Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control -- Dallas successfully conducted two simultaneous tests of the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) upgraded M270A1 launcher and the Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) Block IA Missile today at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

The MLRS M270A1 test verified software on the upgraded launcher and validated the systems readiness to move to Operational Testing (OT) next year. With today's launch of an ATACMS Block IA Missile, the launcher completes its fifth firing test of the MLRS Family of Munitions (MFOM). Previous rockets and missiles fired from the upgraded launcher included the MLRS M26 Basic Rocket, the MLRS M28 Reduced-Range Practice Rocket (RRPR), the MLRS Extended- Range Rocket (ER) and the ATACMS Block I Missile.

The ATACMS Block 1A Missile was fired as part of the Stockpile Reliability Program (SRP), which tests missiles in the current Army inventory.

"By testing these two systems at the same time, we not only verify that the systems work well together, but we also achieved a significant cost savings for our customer," said Ron Abbott, vice president of fire support programs at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control.

The M270A1 program is a major upgrade to the MLRS launcher. It includes an Improved Fire Control System (IFCS) that features a Global Positioning System (GPS), as well as the ability to process large blocks of data from new smart munitions within tactical timelines. Operating and maintenance costs will be reduced because of greater reliability and ease of repair on IFCS parts.

The systems also incorporates the Improved Launcher Mechanical System (ILMS) upgrade, which dramatically reduces the time needed to aim and reload the launcher. In a typical fire mission, the ILMS-equipped launcher is six times faster than the current M270 launcher. Reload time is decreased by more than 30 percent. Crew and launcher survivability will be greatly enhanced because total exposure time on the battlefield will be significantly reduced.

Each Block IA missile has a range almost twice that of the original Block I ATACMS. The increase in range is accomplished by reducing the payload of submunitions. In addition, a GPS receiver has been added to the missile to further improve accuracy.

Although the payload is reduced, the improved accuracy of the Block IA missile maintains effectiveness against high-priority targets.

Located in Dallas and Orlando, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control develops, manufactures and supports advanced combat, missile, rocket and space systems. The company is organized in seven program/mission areas: Strike Weapons, Air Defense, Anti-Armor, Naval Munitions, Fire Control and Sensors, Fire Support and Product Development.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global enterprise principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced-technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's core businesses are systems integration, space, aeronautics, and technology services.

For additional information, visit our website: <http://www.missilesandfirecontrol.com/>.

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