

Lockheed Martin's JASSM Demonstrates First Conventional Guided Missile Launch From B-1B

PRNewswire-FirstCall
ORLANDO, Fla.

A Lockheed Martin Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) was successfully launched from a B-1B bomber Oct. 30 over China Lake, California, making it the first conventional guided missile launch from a B-1B.

The separation test vehicle demonstrated successful operation of JASSM during captive carry, launch from the B-1B's Multi-Purpose Rotary Launcher (MPRL) and flight. The test met all launch objectives and achieved a stable and controlled flight.

"This mission was planned and carried out by the 419th B-1 special project office at Edwards Air Force Base," said Gerry Freisthler, program director of the Lethal Strike Joint Systems Program Office at Eglin AFB, Florida. That's a credit to them and to the Lockheed Martin trainers."

The mission's three main objectives were met during this test. The first objective included data collection for the Air Force to qualitatively and quantitatively demonstrate the safe and acceptable separation of the JASSM from the B-1B launcher. The second objective was to demonstrate the capability to successfully launch JASSM using the aircraft's avionics flight software. The final objective was to demonstrate the required aircraft and weapon interface functions.

"This successful B-1 separation further demonstrates our operational flexibility on multiple aircraft," said Randy Bigum, vice president of Strike Weapons at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. "Lockheed Martin is on schedule and moving forward to obtain B-1B operational capability."

The B-1B is one of JASSM's objective platforms with a load-out of 24 missiles. The first instrumented measurement vehicle (IMV) test on the B-1B was performed on Jan. 12, 1998. Additional jettisons were conducted March 6, July 2 and Aug. 27-28, 2003. Other objective platforms for JASSM, which has a range greater than 200 miles, include B-2, B-52, F-16, F/A-18, F-35 and F-117 aircraft.

The B-1B also is a threshold aircraft for the next generation of the JASSM missile called JASSM-Extended Range (ER). The JASSM-ER program will significantly increase missile range to greater than 500 nautical miles by incorporating a new engine and increasing the fuel loading. Both of these changes occur without affecting the missile's outer mold line, and these low-risk modifications dramatically reduce development, test costs and time. The extended range missile will be produced at Lockheed Martin's manufacturing facility in Troy, Alabama, utilizing personnel who currently manufacture the baseline JASSM missile. JASSM-ER is currently in Phase I of a two-phase program. The Phase I effort includes engine component fabrication and performance tests, procurement activities and Phase II development proposal activities. Phase II go-ahead initiates design verification testing and culminates with flight testing. The flight test plan includes five development and operational tests.

In addition, Lockheed Martin is working closely with the Air Force to define a data link capability for JASSM. This capability could enable the missile to be redirected in flight or to be guided to a moving target. The capability could be available for inclusion on JASSM-ER.

A 2,000-pound class weapon with a dual-mode penetrator and blast fragmentation warhead, JASSM cruises autonomously in adverse weather, day or night, using a state-of-the-art infrared seeker in addition to the anti-jam GPS to find a specific aimpoint on the target. Its stealthy airframe makes it extremely difficult for the enemy to engage it in flight.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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