Lockheed Martin's THAAD Missile Successful In Developmental Flight Test

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DALLAS

Lockheed Martin successfully conducted a developmental flight test of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile today at White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), NM. This was the first flight of the Block '04 missile that is being tested under an Engineering and Manufacturing contract awarded to Lockheed Martin in 2000.

The test completed today starts a new round of THAAD developmental testing that builds on the investment from earlier THAAD tests, which included two consecutive target intercepts in 1999. Today's test was designed to evaluate the missile during fly-out, as well as demonstrate and collect data on missile control. No target was involved in the test. Preliminary data indicates all test objectives were achieved.

Some of the specific objectives of this test included evaluating how the missile exited the canister, booster and kill vehicle separation, kill vehicle control, and operation of the divert and attitude control system (DACS). Although the complete THAAD system includes a radar, fire control, launchers and missiles, today's test was of the missile only.

"This is a great day for the warfighter, our customer and the entire THAAD team as we move a step closer toward making this system's unique capabilities available for operational use," said Tom McGrath, Lockheed Martin program manager and vice president for THAAD. "The THAAD team has prepared for this initial developmental flight test for a long time, and we remain focused on building on this momentum as we plan and prepare for future tests."

"THAAD is designed to defend U.S. troops, allied forces, population centers and critical infrastructure against threat ballistic missiles," said Mike Trotsky, vice president -- Air and Missile Defense programs at Lockheed Martin. "THAAD's unique endo- and exo-atmospheric capability enlarges the battle space to allow multiple intercept opportunities in both the late-midcourse and terminal phases of ballistic missile trajectories. This flexibility provides added protection with layered coverage."

The THAAD missile uses hit-to-kill technology to destroy short, medium and intermediate range ballistic missiles that can carry weapons of mass destruction. THAAD can accept cues from the sea-based Aegis system, satellites and other external sensors to further extend the battle space and defended area coverage. THAAD was designed to provide upper-tier, layered coverage and operate in concert with the lower-tier PAC-3 Missile system. A key element of the nation's Ballistic Missile Defense System, THAAD is a Missile Defense Agency program.

"We approached the start of flight testing very systematically, including an extensive ground test program and complete qualification of the missile and its components," said Tory Bruno, Lockheed Martin vice president for the THAAD missile. "This disciplined approach paid off today, and our entire team of employees and subcontractors was singularly focused on achieving mission success."

THAAD's next flight test will launch a missile with all elements of the integrated weapon system engaged and operating. The next four THAAD flight tests will be conducted at WSMR. After those flights, the test program will move to Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, HI, where range space allows THAAD to fly increasingly longer and more complex missions.

BROADCAST MEDIA:

Video of today's THAAD flight will be available from 4:00 p.m. to 4:10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) for downlink via satellite IA6, K13 analog transponder, downlink frequency 11957 vertical, audio 6.2 and 6.8. Trouble hotline is 915-544-8837. News media point of contact for the video downlink is Pam Rogers, MDA Communications, at (256) 503-3726.

Lockheed Martin is prime contractor and systems integrator for the THAAD missile defense system. Major subcontractors on the program include: Raytheon Co., radar; Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne, Inc., divert and attitude control system (DACS); Honeywell, mission computer and inertial measurement unit (IMU); BAE Systems, infrared seeker; Aerojet-General Corporation, missile booster; Hamilton Sundstrand, thrust vector assembly; and Pacific Scientific, laser initiated ordnance system.

Lockheed Martin is a world leader in systems integration and the development of air and missile defense systems

and technologies, including the first operational hit-to-kill missile defense system. It also has considerable experience in missile design and production, infrared seekers, command and control/battle management, and communications, precision pointing and tracking optics, as well as radar and signal processing. The company makes significant contributions to all major U.S. missile defense systems and participates in several global missile defense partnerships.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 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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