Lockheed Martin Demonstrates Supersonic Payload Dispense During RATTLRS Sled Testing

Lockheed Martin successfully completed a series of sled tests, further demonstrating the future tactical suitability of the Revolutionary Approach To Time-critical Long Range Strike (RATTLRS) system. RATTLRS is part of the National Aerospace Initiative and is a flight demonstration program to increase capabilities and performance for expendable supersonic vehicles.

Lockheed Martin conducted the high supersonic sled tests at the Holloman High Speed Sled Track in New Mexico. "This round of testing evaluated innovative dispenser systems that overcome the complex dynamic flow associated with a supersonic weapon," said Frank Webster, Lockheed Martin sled test lead. "This includes an ejection device that closes up the airframe cavities to eliminate disruptive air flow and provide extra support to significantly reduce pitching and allow for more rapid stabilization."

Subsonic sled tests conducted earlier in the year dispensed four representative guided munition simulants. Those tests were followed by the supersonic sled tests that dispensed smart munition simulants while boosting down the track at more than 2,000 feet per second. Controlled pitch and rapid stabilization were demonstrated as the munition simulants tracked the sled cart for thousands of feet. The tests show that problems with conventional munition retarding devices (such as chutes and ballutes) can be avoided thereby allowing for rapid engagement of multiple targets. The sled test program is part of the overall RATTLRS risk reduction effort, culminating in flight demonstrations in late 2007.

Lockheed Martin is the industry leader in high-speed aerospace systems, providing expertise, technology and operational systems to the warfighter. The RATTLRS program is a key component in Lockheed Martin's goal to develop high speed weapon systems for joint U.S. customers.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

SOURCE: Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company

Web site: http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

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