Lockheed Martin's THAAD System Successfully Achieves First Salvo Mission Against A Separating Target

Lockheed Martin and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) conducted their sixth successful test in six attempts of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) weapon system yesterday at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on Kauai, HI. This flight test demonstrated the system's ability to detect, track and intercept a separating target inside the Earth's atmosphere.

This was the first salvo mission, with two THAAD interceptors launched against a single separating target which is a tactical option for the system. As planned in the mission objectives, data indicate the first interceptor destroyed the target while the second interceptor was destroyed by range safety officers.

"We have again confirmed THAAD's capabilities against a separating target, while adopting a tactical scenario," said Tom McGrath, program manager and vice president for THAAD at Lockheed Martin. "Our mission success speaks loudly, as we continue to perform under very challenging objectives. THAAD will provide a solid protective umbrella for the Warfighter."

As in previous tests, soldiers operated the THAAD system throughout this mission, employing a tactical launch mode.

Lockheed Martin is the THAAD prime contractor and systems integrator for four major components: a radar; a fire control and communications unit; launchers and interceptors. Since November 2005 the THAAD program has achieved a 100 percent mission success record in 11 flight test missions, including six successful intercepts of threat representative targets.

A production contract for the first two THAAD Batteries was awarded to Lockheed Martin in late 2006. Production of the THAAD launcher and fire control and communications unit is underway at Lockheed Martin's manufacturing facility in Camden, AR, and interceptor production is being conducted at Lockheed Martin's Pike County Facility in Troy, AL. Delivery of the first Fire Unit is scheduled for later this year.

THAAD is designed to defend U.S. troops, allied forces, population centers and critical infrastructure against short- to medium range ballistic missiles. THAAD comprises a fire control and communications system, interceptors, launchers and a radar. The THAAD interceptor uses hit-to-kill technology to destroy targets, and THAAD is the only weapon system that engages threat ballistic missiles at both endo- and exo-atmospheric altitudes.

A key element of the nation's Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS), THAAD is a Missile Defense Agency program, with their project office located in Huntsville, AL. The agency is developing a BMDS to defend the United States, its deployed forces, friends and allies against ballistic missiles of all ranges and in all phases of flight.

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. 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 is a global security company that employs about 146,000 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 2008 sales of $42.7 billion.

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