Lockheed Martin Successfully Completes Formal Testing Of Second-Generation Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense Capability

Lockheed Martin recently demonstrated the second generation of its Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) capability in a formal U.S. Navy test event.

This configuration, known as Aegis BMD 4.0.1, enables the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and the Navy to defeat more complex ballistic missile threats and also introduces the BMD signal processor, which improves target identification.

Aegis BMD 4.0.1 marks the beginning of the transition to the Navy's open architecture - a transition that will be complete with software upgrades, known as Advanced Capability Build 12, scheduled for 2012.

"This milestone represents the continuing evolution of Aegis that will lead to the merger of Aegis open architecture and Aegis BMD in 2012," said Nick Bucci, Lockheed Martin director of BMD development programs. "This next-generation signal processor upgrade provides a leap-ahead capability that improves system effectiveness against expanding enemy threats."

This upgrade is enhanced by the Aegis system's ability to incorporate commercial off-the-shelf computing technology and open architecture standards. Further testing - a tracking exercise this fall and an at sea intercept test in March 2011 - will result in certification and deployment in September 2011.

The MDA and the Navy are jointly developing and fielding Aegis BMD as part of the United States' BMD system. Recently the Navy's independent operational test agent assessed the first generation Aegis BMD and SM-3 Block IA system to be operationally effective and operationally suitable.

Currently, a total of 23 Aegis BMD-equipped warships - 20 in the Navy and three in the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force - have the certified capability to engage ballistic missiles and perform long-range surveillance and tracking missions. Twelve additional ships have been identified for modification to perform ballistic missile defense in the next 36 months.

Lockheed Martin is a world leader in systems integration and the development of air and missile defense systems and technologies. The company makes significant contributions to all major U.S. missile defense systems and participates in several global missile defense partnerships.

Lockheed Martin has considerable experience in interceptor design and production, infrared seekers, command and control/battle management, and communications, precision pointing and tracking optics, as well as radar and signal processing.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 136,000 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 2009 sales of $45.2 billion.

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