Norwegian HELLFIRE Shore Defense System Completes System Verification Flight Test

The Norwegian Coastal Artillery has completed four successful firings of the HELLFIRE Shore Defense System off an island in northern Norway. These firings completed the system verification flight test.

Bofors of Sweden and Boeing are providing the HELLFIRE Shore Defense System to Norway. Boeing in Duluth, Ga., provides the HELLFIRE missile sections and launch control equipment. Bofors, the prime contractor, assembles the Boeing-supplied missile sections with their blast/fragmentation warhead. Bofors also produces the man-portable tripod launcher.

"We are very pleased with the results of the system verification test," Cmdr. Arild Roen, program manager for the Norwegian Navy Materiel Command said. "The entire HELLFIRE shore defense system demonstrated that it performs in accordance with our coastal defense requirements."

These successful firings follow two years of HELLFIRE launch demonstrations in northern Norway by the Coastal Artillery. Earlier successful launches were conducted with the anti-armor version of the HELLFIRE missile.

"The success of this program demonstrates the versatility of the HELLFIRE missile," said Michael T. Boyce, vice president and general manager of Weapons Programs for the Boeing Military Aircraft and Missile Systems Group. "HELLFIRE, developed as an anti-armor missile for the U.S. Army's AH-64 Apache helicopter, is a modular missile that can be fired from many different launch platforms. Its modularity allows it to change not only warheads, as demonstrated in the Shore Defense System, but also seekers. The Brimstone variant uses the anti-armor warhead with a Marconi millimeter wave radar seeker."

Norway has ordered more than 350 HELLFIRE missiles with the blast-fragmentation warhead. The complete system includes two launchers per firing unit with fire control equipment and a laser designator. The Norwegian Coastal Artillery selected a laser designator from Litton Industries for the HELLFIRE Shore Defense System. The units deploy using fast Combat Boat 90 patrol boats purchased from Sweden.

"The successful completion of the system verification test exemplifies teamwork and allows delivery of missiles to the Norwegian Navy," said George Handley, Boeing program manager of International HELLFIRE Programs. "This team has been together for six years and worked toward this system verification test. After deliveries, the team will continue to work together on a follow-on maintenance support program."

The test was conducted with a mobile sea target. A target board was erected on the forward deck of an old corvette, and launches were conducted while the ship was under way. The 600-ton ship was operated by remote control-making it the largest remote-controlled vessel in the world.

Ranges of the firings varied from 6,000 to 7,300 meters under varying weather conditions and sea states.

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