First Brimstone Missile Flight Test Successful

A Brimstone anti-armor weapon was successfully launched for the first time at Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz.

The launch took place earlier this month from a Brimstone launcher mounted on a specially constructed platform, and was the first in a series of ground-based trials now taking place. These will be followed by air-launched firings and flight trials later this year.

"The primary objectives of the launch were to verify the attitude controlled, closed-loop stability maneuvering capability of the missile, evaluate telemetry system performance under flight maneuvering conditions and to determine inertial navigation system accuracy," said Paul Palagyi, Brimstone program manager for Boeing. "All of these objectives were successfully achieved."

Boeing is under contract to prime contractor Alenia Marconi Systems to provide the Brimstone missile airframe and major system components, including the smart launcher. Brimstone is designed to be a, autonomous weapon for launch from fixed wing aircraft such as the Harrier, Tornado and Eurofighter 2000. The missile will be capable of defeating modern and future armored threats in a wide range of scenarios, and has stand-off capability to minimize the threat to the delivery aircraft.

Brimstone is a smart modular missile that uses an autonomous millimeter wave seeker. Externally, it is identical to the combat proven HELLFIRE missile, and is fully compatible with HELLFIRE installations. The Brimstone system consists of three missiles mounted on a three-rail launcher.

Commenting on the test, Alun Fishburne, Alenia Marconi Systems' Brimstone project director said, "Once again we have successfully achieved a major stage in the Brimstone program on schedule. This is a tremendous achievement and a testament to the dedication and commitment of all those involved in the Brimstone development programme in Alenia Marconi Systems, Boeing and the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence Brimstone Integrated Project Team."

Alenia Marconi Systems, an equal shares joint venture company between Finmeccanica of Italy and GEC of the United Kingdom, is teamed with Boeing for the development and production of the Brimstone system.

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For further information:
Robert Algarotti
(636) 925-5790