U.S. Air Force Demonstrates Precision-Strike Accuracy in CALCM

The U.S. Air Force last week demonstrated precision-strike accuracy with a Block 1A Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile (CALCM) in a flight test at the Utah Test and Training Range. The test also validated advanced Global Positioning System (GPS) processing flight software, which provides the precision delivery guidance.

The flight test culminated the three-year development program to upgrade the CALCM with precision GPS-aided inertial navigation.

Block 1A missiles equipped with the upgraded avionics have already been delivered to the Air Force. Under a separate contract, precision accuracy kits are being produced to retrofit the entire CALCM Block 0/1 inventory by February 2002.

CALCM is produced by incorporating a conventional warhead into surplus AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missiles (ALCM). Under a $59.2 million contract initiated in 1999, Boeing converted 272 surplus ALCMs to conventional blast/fragmentation warhead CALCMs.

Currently, under a $45 million contract, an additional 50 missiles are being converted to a CALCM variant designated as AGM-86D. The AGM-86D uses a penetrating warhead and precision guidance to destroy hardened or buried targets.

CALCM is a long-range standoff weapon with more than 200 missiles having been employed effectively in combat. CALCM has become the Air Force's weapon of choice, principally because of its unparalleled ability to deliver very large (3,000-pound class) warheads with exceptional accuracy over distances in excess of 600 miles.

Although the missile has been out of production for 15 years, Boeing has retained a core program group in Seattle, providing logistic and engineering support to maintain and modernize both the ALCM and CALCM fleets.

"We're happy to continue supporting the Air Force on the ALCM/CALCM program," said Carl Avila, Boeing ALCM/CALCM program manager. "Although the original ALCM airframe was designed in the early 1980s as a 10-year weapon, it has proven itself as an enduring, dependable product. It is gratifying to see that the CALCM derivatives will remain the mainstay of the Air Force's long-range, conventional strike weapons for the next two decades."

CALCM conversions are performed at the Boeing facility in St. Charles, Mo., alongside production of the Navy's Harpoon and SLAM-ER missiles and the Air Force's Joint Direct Attack Munition. The conversion process includes a total disassembly of the ALCMs, refurbishment or replacement of almost every part, overhaul of the engine and other hardware, structural modification of the airframe, then reassembly with modified avionics and the new conventional warhead.

###

01-61

For further information:
Robert Algarotti
(636) 947-2966
robert.a.algarotti@boeing.com