Boeing Harpoon Block II Missile Successfully Attacks Land Target

The U.S. Navy yesterday successfully tested the new Harpoon Block II missile against a land target on San Nicolas Island at the Naval Air Warfare Center-Weapons Division sea range off Pt. Mugu, Calif.

This was the first time the missile was employed against a land target. The missile demonstrated its coastal target suppression capabilities by scoring a direct hit on a simulated SA-20 Mobile Radar Van. One of the many new capabilities of the Block II Harpoon is its ability to use its GPS-aided navigation to fly precisely to pre-launch programmed target coordinates.

Harpoon is the premier surface-to-surface, anti-ship missile in the world. It is deployed by the navies of 26 countries.

"Block II is part of our spiral development plan for Harpoon," said Jim O'Neill, Boeing general manager of Navy Missile Systems. "Harpoon has proven it is a naval precision-strike weapon that has the ability to attack surface ships and land targets at standoff ranges."

Harpoon Block II provides accurate long-range guidance for coastal and ship targets by incorporating the low-cost inertial measuring unit from the Boeing Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) program; and the software, mission computer, integrated Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation System and GPS antenna from the Standoff Land Attack Missile Expanded Response (SLAM-ER).

"Today's operation again proved the viability and capability of the Harpoon Block II through a modernization upgrade of the missile using proven hardware components from the SLAM-ER and JDAM missile programs," said Capt. Carl Reiber, Navy program manager, Standoff Missile Systems (PMA-258).

The missile was launched from the USS Decatur (DDG-73), an Arleigh Burke- class guided missile destroyer under the command of Cdr. Vic Mercado. The USS Decatur installed an upgraded Harpoon Ship Command and Launch Control System (HSCLCS) prior to the first launch of the Block II missile in May 2001. The enhancements of the launch system provide for GPS initialization and for faster and more user-friendly engagement planning.

Harpoon Block II is capable of executing both anti-ship missions and coastal target suppression. For conventional anti-ship missions, such as open ocean or near-land, the inclusion of GPS/INS improves guidance to the target search area. In addition, the missile is initialized with information about areas to avoid in the search pattern. This information, coupled with the accurate navigation solution, greatly reduces target location uncertainty and allows the Harpoon's active radar seeker to better discriminate the desired target ships from islands, other obstructions or neutral ships.

To strike targets on land and ships in port, the missile uses GPS-aided inertial navigation to hit a user-defined target impact point. The 500-pound blast warhead delivers lethal firepower against a wide variety of land-based targets, including coastal defense sites, surface-to-air missile sites, exposed aircraft, port/industrial facilities and ships in port. These Block II improvements will maintain Harpoon's probability of target kill even against ships very close to land and in congested waterways.

The multimission Block II missile is capable of being deployed from all current Harpoon missile system platforms with either upgraded existing command and launch equipment or the new Advanced Harpoon Weapon Control System (AHWCS). Block II also is fully compatible with Block I capability and existing HSCLCS and AHWCS. Both HSCLCS and AHWCS allow all navies to utilize Harpoon for current and future missions. Harpoon Block II missiles are being sold to foreign countries under U.S. foreign military sales agreements.

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