U.S. Navy Successfully Completes Testing of Boeing Harpoon Block II Missile

The U.S. Navy recently completed developmental testing of the new Harpoon Block II missile at the Naval Air Warfare Center-Weapons Division sea range off Pt. Mugu, Calif.

In this most recent and final test, the missile was launched from the USS Decatur (DDG-73), an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer, against a mobile ship target close to land.

"The Harpoon Block II missile has successfully demonstrated its effectiveness against sea, land and littoral targets," said Jim O'Neill, Boeing general manager of Navy Missile Systems. "We can now provide our customers with a low-cost, low-risk approach to protecting waterways and littoral regions."

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 program, and the mission computer and Global Positioning System receiver/antenna from the Boeing Standoff Land Attack Missile Expanded Response (SLAM-ER). Existing SLAM-ER navigation and land-strike software and proven Harpoon ship-attack software are the foundation for major portions of the Block II mission software.

"The Block II developmental effort clearly demonstrates that infusing leading-edge technology into mature and proven weapon systems, such as Harpoon, can produce extraordinarily effective operational capabilities," said the U.S. Navy program manager for Standoff Missile Systems.

Harpoon Block II can execute 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 directly to the intended target. The accurate navigation solution allows the Navy to discriminate ship targets 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 designated target aimpoint.

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 high-hit probability even against ships very close to land and in congested waterways.

The multi-mission Block II missile can be deployed from all current Harpoon missile system platforms with either existing command and launch equipment or the new Advanced Harpoon Weapon Control System.

Numerous foreign countries are considering the Harpoon Block II missile under U.S. foreign military sales agreements. Deliveries could begin in January 2002.

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