



Northrop Grumman Successfully Tests Kinetic Energy Interceptor Missile Defense Battle Management Capability Ahead of Schedule

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RESTON, Va. and COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo., March 16, 2006 (PRIMEZONE) -- This month Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE:NOC) successfully completed the first of two key Fiscal Year 2006 tests of the Kinetic Energy Interceptor (KEI) battle management capability, known as the KEI Fire Control and Communications (KFC/C) system, five weeks ahead of schedule.

The purpose of these tests is to further verify that the KFC/C system solution can "close the fire-control loop," meeting the timelines and accuracy requirements associated with engaging and shooting down a target missile in the boost/ascent phase of flight.

KEI is a mobile, land-based missile defense system that, when deployed, will be able to destroy a hostile missile during its boost, ascent and early midcourse phase of flight. Under contract to the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA), Northrop Grumman is leading the team charged with developing and testing a KEI capability. The program is currently on track for a booster flight in 2008, a key knowledge point for MDA.

In the first test, which occurred on March 1, Northrop Grumman successfully demonstrated that the newly built Continental U.S. KEI (CKEI) system, a state-of-the-art capability located at the Joint National Integration Center at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., can forward sensor data received from multiple global satellite constellations to a deployed KEI battery to further increase accuracy for a boost/ascent engagement. This permanent CKEI site will provide a vital link for valuable national sensor data to fielded KEI batteries, once the overall system becomes fully operational.

"The KFC/C team demonstrated the capability and value of using additional sensor data to generate a KEI fire-control solution that ensures timely and accurate engagement of the boost/ascent phase threat," said Craig Staresinich, vice president and general manager of the KEI program for Northrop Grumman Mission Systems. "The next test will demonstrate the benefit of adding ballistic missile defense system radar assets to our available sensor suite...further increasing our ability to negate the threat."

KEI has made significant progress over the past year, meeting several critical milestones to mitigate risk. These include a successful firing of the second-stage rocket motor in January with ATK and Raytheon, a previous successful test of the system's battle-management capability in May 2005, and two high-speed wind-tunnel tests performed by Raytheon, principal teammate and lead for the interceptor development work, in July and December of 2005. The program plans a number of other risk-reduction activities including a test of the stage one rocket motor later this year, leading up to a booster flight in 2008.

For more information about Northrop Grumman in missile defense, go to www.ngc.com/missiledefense/.

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CONTACT: Marynoele Benson
Northrop Grumman Mission Systems
(703) 741-7723
Marynoele.benson@ngc.com