

U.S. Army hypersonic weapon test is a success



On Thursday, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command conducted the first test flight of the Advanced Hypersonic Weapon (AHW) concept. At 6:30 a.m. EST (1:30 a.m. Hawaii-Aleutian Time), a first-of-its-kind glide vehicle, designed to fly within the earth's atmosphere at hypersonic speed and long range, was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, Hawaii to the Reagan Test Site, U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll.

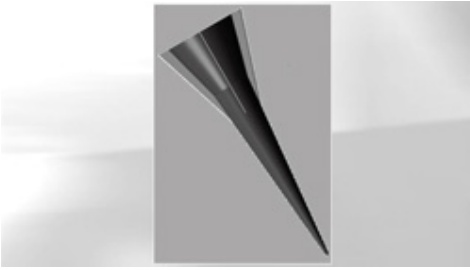
The test's objective was to collect data on hypersonic boost-glide technologies and test range performance for long-range atmospheric flight. The Army tested a number of systems: aerodynamics; navigation, guidance, and control; and thermal protection technologies.

According to Department of Defense, a three-stage booster system launched the AHW glide vehicle and successfully deployed it on the desired flight trajectory. The vehicle flew a non-ballistic glide trajectory at hypersonic speed to the planned impact location at the Reagan Test Site. Space, air, sea, and ground platforms collected vehicle performance data during all phases of flight. The data collected will be used by the Department of Defense to model and develop future hypersonic boost-glide capabilities.

The AHW program is managed and executed by the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command program office in Huntsville, Ala. The booster system and glide vehicle were developed by Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, N.M. and the thermal protection system by the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Research Development and Engineering Center, Huntsville, Ala.

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The Department of Defense is using AHW to develop and demonstrate technologies for Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS). As part of the CPGS effort, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency conducted boost-glide flight tests in April 2010 and August 2011, results from which were used in planning the AHW flight test.

[Coverage at Wired](#) [1]

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[1] <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2011/11/2400-miles-in-minutes-hypersonic-weapon-passes-easy-test/>

[2] <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14920>