

STANDOFF LAND-ATTACK MISSILE EXPANDED RESPONSE (SLAM ER)



The Standoff Land-Attack Missile- Expanded Response (SLAM-ER) is a deployed precision tactical weapon that provides Joint Force and Carrier Battle Group Commanders with a standoff precision strike capability and is launched from carrier battle group aircraft. An advanced derivative of its predecessor (SLAM), the SLAM-ER has longer range, reduced susceptibility to countermeasures, increased probability of kill against hardened targets, and improved guidance with an integrated Global Positioning System and Inertial Navigation System. Improved user interfaces for mission planning and an automated target acquisition (ATA) capability to aid the pilot in finding and killing targets are being retrofitted to both SLAM and SLAM-ER.

SLAM-ER seeks to provide incremental improvements in range and penetrating lethality. ATA provides aimpoint cueing assistance to the pilot in man-in-the-loop (MITL) mode in cluttered scenes, marginal weather, and countermeasures environments. This is accomplished by employing scene matching technology (hardware and software modifications). The ATA may also be used in a stand-alone mode when MITL is not feasible or desirable. SLAM-ER uses a newly developed titanium-cased warhead to achieve greater hard target penetration and lethality.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SLAM-ER entered EMD after a Milestone IV/II decision in FY95. The Navy decided to procure the FY96 buy of SLAM in the SLAM-ER configuration, avoiding future retrofit costs. The LRIP I decision was made in April 1997, with LRIP II approved in April 1998. OPEVAL was conducted from August 1998 to May 1999. As detailed in the 1999 Annual Report to Congress, DOT&E assessed that during OPEVAL, SLAM-ER was not operationally effective and not operationally suitable as tested. DOT&E did not concur with COMOPTEVFOR's assessment that SLAM-ER was operationally effective but not suitable. An LRIP III decision was made in August 1999. These three production decisions totaled over 100 missiles. The program corrected deficiencies and a Verification of Correction of Deficiencies (VCD) Phase examined all corrected deficiencies to ensure the fleet had an operationally effective and suitable system upon introduction. DOT&E monitored the VCD phase and assessed that SLAM-ER is operationally effective and suitable as tested during the VCD phase. Milestone III and the full-rate production decision were approved in May 2000.

TEST & EVALUATION ACTIVITY

FOT&E (OT-III A) began in September 2001 to evaluate the ATA capability. The test plan incorporates one developmental test flight (DT-1), three developmental/operational test flights (DT/OT-1, 2, and 3), and one operational test flight (OT-1). Initial testing included several captive carry flights of the missile with positive assessments by the operational test pilots. Initial developmental tests suffered from missile system failures not related to ATA: first, a hang fire and then failure of the missile wings to deploy after launch. These were followed by three effective tests (DT-1; DT/OT-1; DT/OT-2). One event remains – operational test of the missile with ATA (OT-1) against a land-based target in spring 2002. Testing of missile effectiveness against ships (AsuW) is planned but not completed.

TEST & EVALUATION ASSESSMENT

DOT&E has approved the TEMP and test plan and will monitor and report on the final operational test flight (OT-1). DOT&E will also assess overall missile reliability given the two missile reliability failures that occurred during initial ATA tests: one missile was a hang fire and the other missile failed to deploy its wings after launch.

Both the ATA and AsuW modes employ the new SEM 1.6 software package that is the configuration for all fleet deployments of missile in the foreseeable future. Testing data to date suggests that ATA mode could be useful in cueing the pilot. Final evaluation will be based on operational test data.