

New AMRAAM Variant Completes Two Free Flight Test Shots



An AMRAAM launched from an F/A-18F Super Hornet. U.S. NAVY EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) joint program office completed the second live fire test of the new AIM-120D-3 missile variant, incorporating upgraded hardware into the guidance section on May 12, the Naval Air Systems Command said in a release.

The weapon safely launched from an F/A-18F Super Hornet and flew the expected flight path over the Point Mugu Sea Test Range in California. Preliminary analysis provided by the prime contractor, Raytheon Missiles & Defense, indicates all primary and secondary objectives of the shot were met.

“Completing the first two free flight shots of upgraded hardware and software is a significant milestone in the integration and test phase of the new AIM-120D-3 missile,” said Col. Sean Bradley, AMRAAM Senior Materiel Leader at the U.S. Air Force’s Armament Directorate. “These successes are important to the overall execution of the Form, Fit, Function Refresh (F3R) program; a program implemented to address an increasing number of production challenges due to obsolescence of various electronic components within the AIM-120.”

Combined with software upgrades, AIM-120D-3 will deliver advanced capabilities to improve missile effectiveness against advanced threats for Air Force, Navy, and Allied Partners. This missile shot from an F/A-18F Super Hornet tested the missile’s safe separation autopilot and free-flight navigation capabilities.

Together, with the first shot on Dec. 9, 2020, these shots represent a critical first in a series of developmental flight tests that provides crucial data to assess the missile’s

ability to acquire, track and guide to targets.

AMRAAM is the world's most sophisticated, combat-proven air dominance weapon. With AIM-120D-3 production deliveries beginning in 2023, the AIM-120 missile will continue to meet warfighter requirements in all weather and beyond visual range engagements. Its capabilities have been fully demonstrated in over 4,900 test shots and more than 13 air-to-air combat victories.