



NAMDC

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TWO DAHLGREN COMMANDS PLAY PIVOTAL ROLE WITH AEGIS ASHORE PROGRAM

Two Dahlgren-based commands are playing critical roles in the Navy's fielding of an Aegis weapon system scheduled for operation in Deveslu, Romania, in 2015.

Termed "Aegis Ashore" for its location on terra firma instead of high seas, Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense and Navy Air and Missile Defense Command – both based in Dahlgren – are working to ensure this revolutionary program is operational on time.

Aegis BMD serves as the Navy element for the Missile Defense Agency, and in this role it supports research, development, testing and acquisition of Aegis Ashore. NAMDC oversees the BMD Enterprise, which aligns programs and requirements to ensure operations milestones are met.

Representatives from both organizations recently met in Moorestown, N.J., to view the construction and assembly site and receive a program update by Lockheed Martin – contractor for the program.

Aegis BMD and NAMDC had a first-hand look at the massive foundation for the Aegis Ashore assembly site. Some 80 truckloads of concrete were recently poured to ensure the four-story facility is on solid ground. And while this multi-ton foundation portrays an image of permanence, Aegis Ashore is anything but.

"This system is built with modularity as a core component," said Dr. Kevin Brennan, Aegis Ashore Deckhouse Design Lead. Aegis components are assembled on large skids called removable equipment units. They are then fitted together inside the facility like one very high-tech set of legos. This allows the weapons system and its components to slide into place. "The amount of innovation to build this system and be able to quickly disassemble and move it is remarkable," he added.

The need for modularity in part is driven by the requirements to build and rebuild the complex at several sites and the requirements to disassemble and move from its deployed location if required. "This complex, multi-faceted project, takes one of the world's most advanced weapons systems and makes it totally transportable," said Brendan R. Scanlon, Aegis Ashore director for Lockheed Martin.

In the near future walls will spring up on the foundation and the deckhouse will begin to take shape. After testing the equipment in New Jersey, the equipment will be disassembled, transported and reassembled at the Pacific Missile Range in Hawaii for further testing.

At nearly the same time another Aegis platform will be assembled in New Jersey on the same foundation. After this system completes testing, it will be moved to Romania. The operational date is set for 2015.

Aegis Ashore is part of the president's European Phased Adaptive Approach for ballistic missile defense. This approach deploys proven capabilities to protect our NATO partners, allies and the United States.