



PRESS RELEASE



AIR FORCE GLOBAL STRIKE COMMAND

Headquarters Air Force Global Strike Command
Office of Public Affairs
Barksdale AFB, La. 71110-2279
(318) 456-1305
After hours, call (318) 456-2151

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MINUTEMAN III TEST LAUNCH SCHEDULED

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. – An operational test launch of an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile is scheduled for May 21 between 03:01 and 09:01 a.m. (PST) from Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

The missile's unarmed single re-entry vehicle is expected to travel approximately 4,190 miles to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

"These tests provide us the opportunity to demonstrate the readiness of the ICBM force," said Col. Richard Pagliuco, 576th Flight Test Squadron commander. "Every test provides valuable data regarding the accuracy and reliability of the weapon system."

The launch team, under the direction of the 576th Flight Test Squadron, includes crew members from the 91st Missile Wing, Minot AFB, N.D. Maintenance and operations task force members from the 91st Missile Wing have also conducted operational tasks in support of the launch.

Air Force Global Strike Command's 576th FLTS is responsible for tracking, telemetry and command destruct systems on the missile, which collect mission data and ensure safety requirements are met.

Data collected further validates and verifies the effectiveness, readiness and accuracy of the weapon system while providing valuable information to assist the Air Force in sustaining and modernizing the Minuteman III through 2030.

Agencies across the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy will use the data collected from this mission to ensure a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent. The United States' ability to maintain a strong, credible nuclear deterrent is a key element of U.S. national security and the security of U.S. allies and friends.

For more information about the flight test, call Air Force Global Strike Command Public Affairs at (318) 456-1305 or after hours at (318) 456-2151.

-30-

NOTE TO EDITORS:

Media interested in viewing the launch should call 30th Space Wing Public Affairs personnel at (805) 606-3595. An escort will depart the Visitor Control Center at the Main Gate of Vandenberg for the viewing site at 2 a.m., May 21.