USS Zumwalt Completes First Live-Fire Test



The USS Zumwalt conducts a live-fire of the Mark 46 MOD 2 Gun Weapon System during a combat systems testing trial at sea on May 16. U.S. Navy/Chief Warrant Officer Cameron Chadd

PACIFIC OCEAN – Sailors aboard USS Zumwalt, working with engineers and technicians from Navy surface warfare centers, executed a "structural test fire" of the Mark 46 Mod 2 Gun Weapon System (GWS) at the Naval Air Weapons Center Weapons Division Sea Test Range, Point Mugu, on May 16, according to a U.S. 3rd Fleet release.

"The privilege of being a 'first-in-class' ship includes having the opportunity to systematically conduct testing across the breadth of systems installed onboard the ship," said Capt. Andrew Carlson, Zumwalt's commanding officer. "The real plus is conducting those tests, such as today's live fire with the Mark 46 GWS, which provide tangible evidence of combat capability maturation."

The Mark 46 GWS is a remotely operated naval gun system that uses a 30 mm high-velocity cannon, a forward-looking infrared sensor, a low-light TV camera and a laser rangefinder for shipboard self-defense against small, high speed surface targets. It is a program of record already successfully installed and operated on LPD-17- and LCS-class ships. The test firing aboard the Zumwalt was the first large caliber weapons firing event for the Zumwalt-class destroyer program and occurred only three weeks after the Navy officially accepted delivery of the combat system.

Test fires assess structural and electrical components of the ship against shock and vibration of the weapon firing. They also measure potential hazards to personnel or degradations to adjacent equipment as a result of firing live ordnance. The

tests are a coordinated effort between the Zumwalt Class Destroyer Program Office, the U.S. 3rd Fleet, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet, and the Naval Sea Systems Command surface warfare centers in Dahlgren, Virginia, Port Hueneme, California, and Indian Head, Maryland.

“Today’s event is the first in a chapter of live-fire test events over the next year that will prove the lethal capability that these ships will bring to the fight,” said Lt. Cmdr. Tim Kubisak, the Zumwalt test officer for the Program Executive Office for integrated warfare systems, embarked aboard the Zumwalt.

The Zumwalt-class destroyer is designed and built to execute multiple maritime missions, including deterrence and power projection. The ships’ stealth and ability to operate in both the open ocean and near-shore environments creates a new level of battlespace complexity for potential adversaries.

The Zumwalt is 100 feet longer and 13 feet wider than the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, providing the space required to execute a wider array of surface, undersea and aviation missions.