



Released: April 21, 2000

Two of 13 new advanced conventional bomb modules arrive at Ellsworth

By Capt. T. Patrick Hudson
28th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, S.D. (ACCNS) -- The 28th Munitions Squadron received shipment of the first two of 13 new Advanced Conventional Bomb Modules April 3, taking the B-1B one step closer to Block E integration.

The new ACBMs differ from the ones currently used as the new modules already have the wiring and electronics capability required to handle Block E weapons upgrades.

A bomb module seats inside an aircraft bomb bay and is configured to hold different types and sizes of bombs.

According to 28th MUNS officials, Ellsworth is the first bomber base to receive the new modules. Armament technicians are currently performing acceptance inspections, including complete tear down, rebuild and electrical checkout. The new ACBMs will be available for use by base bomb squadrons in mid-May, and the remaining modules will be delivered by mid-September.



Staff Sgt. Jerry Washburn, 28th Munitions Squadron aircraft armament systems journeyman, performs an inspection on one of the new conventional bomb modules. (U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. T. Patrick Hudson)

"Bomb wings across the Air Force needed more bomb modules," said 1st Lt. Brent Gagnard, ACBM program manager from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. "The ACBMs were uniquely designed to meet the needs of the aircraft during the transition between Block D and Block E. All the munitions folks have to do is switch a circuit card and one cable, and the modules will be ready for Block E."

With the upgrade, the B-1B's will be able to employ Wind Corrected Munitions Dispensers and will still be able to carry Mk-82, 500-pound bombs and cluster bomb units.

Gagnard said, the upgrade helps weapons loading capabilities keep up with changes to the aircraft's on-board computer systems.

"The jets are upgrading from 1970's vintage computers to the capability of today's computers," he said. "This upgrade also includes a new avionics flight software package. With this upgrade, we needed new bomb modules that were compatible with the new computers."

Wing people worked closely with Boeing and Air Combat Command officials to validate technical data during field tests. According to 28th MUNS officials, after in-shop functional checks the ACBM was loaded into a base B-1B for equipment testing, and it flawlessly integrated with the current weapons system.

"The new ACBMs will provide more flexibility to the wing as we upgrade the aircraft," said 2nd Lt. Rafal Rusek, 28th MUNS armament flight commander. "This new capability will make us even more lethal than we've been in the past."

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