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AGM-86C/D Conventional Air-Launched Cruise Missile (CALCM)



Description & Purpose:

The conventional air-launched cruise missile (CALCM) is an affordable, long-range (standoff) missile that has been proven in combat by the U.S. Air Force. It is recognized for its rapid-response capability and is produced by converting surplus nuclear-armed AGM-86B missiles into the AGM-86C/D missile, which is the basis for CALCMs.

General Characteristics:

Launched from a B-52H aircraft, the CALCM has the following specifications and systems:

- Weight: 3,250 pounds
- Dimensions (length, diameter, wing span): 21' long, 4' diameter, 12' wing span
- Payload: conventional high-explosive, blast-fragmentation warhead or Advanced Unitary Penetrator
- Speed: 500 mph
- Engine and fuel: Williams F107-WR-101 engine and JP-10 fuel
- Navigation system: Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver and Inertial Navigation System (INS)

Operation

Powered by a turbofan jet engine that propels the missile at subsonic speeds, the CALCM deploys its folded wings, tail surfaces and engine inlet upon launch. It possesses the following operational characteristics:

- Flies complicated, low-altitude routes to a target by using a terrain contour-matching guidance system and GPS/INS
- Has a small profile that reduces the likelihood of detection by radar
- Requires an enemy force to counterattack each CALCM, which makes defense against them both costly and complicated

The CALCM provides commanders with a long-range (standoff range) weapon that precisely attacks an enemy's facilities. Furthermore, AGM-86D uses a penetrating warhead that can destroy buried or reinforced targets.

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