

Scramjet test successful

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The Freeflight Atmospheric Scramjet Test Technique, or FASTT, is the first liquid fuel-powered scramjet to fly, says the U.S. Office of Naval Research.

A joint Office of Naval Research/Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency vehicle achieved a world first on Dec. 10 at an altitude of 63,000 feet -- becoming the first air-breathing, liquid hydrocarbon fuel-powered scramjet engine to fly, the Office of Naval Research reported.

The approximately 106-inch long, 11-inch diameter, missile-shaped vehicle raced at 5,300 feet per second -- Mach 5.5 -- for 15 seconds before a controlled splashdown into the Atlantic Ocean, the statement said.

The FASTT vehicle project is part of the joint ONR/DARPA Hypersonic Flight Demonstration -- or HyFly -- program, designed to demonstrate low-cost flight test techniques and obtain in-flight engine performance data at hypersonic speeds.

The overall goal of HyFly is to flight-test key technologies enabling a long range, high-speed cruise missile that can cruise at speeds up to Mach 6.

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