GBU-44/B Viper Strike (USAF, 2005, BAT)

Guided Weapon

Type: Guided Weapon
Weight: 20.0 kg
Length: 0.9 m
Span: 0.9 m
Length: 0.9 m
Diameter: 0.14
Generation: None



Properties: Terminal Illumination, Supports Buddy Illumination
Targets: Surface Vessel, Land Structure - Soft, Land Structure - Hardened, Mobile Target - Soft, Mobile Target - Hardened

Sensors / EW:
- Laser Spot Tracker - (Generic, Weapon) Laser Spot Tracker (LST), LST, Laser Spot Tracker, Max range: 27.8 km

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Weapons / Loadouts:
- GBU-44/B Viper Strike - (USAF, 2005, BAT) Guided Weapon. Surface Max: 3.7 km. Land Max: 3.7 km.

Development of this tactical weapon began in 1964, and the first operational US Army battalion deployed to West Germany in September 1973. Lance replaced the MGM-29 Sergeant and MGR-1 Honest John, and was infinitely more capable than both. The small, durable airframe could be launched by the M752 TEL (transporter/erector/launcher) or by a lightweight two-wheeled trailer that could be towed by trucks. The M752 / MGM-52C combination could go from road travel to “missile away” in under 15 minutes. A total of 2100 were built.
The Lance had quite a potent warhead for a tactical SRBM, enough to threaten cities; however because of it’s range only parts of East Germany and Czechoslovakia were vulnerable. It’s main role was to threaten ports, airfields, and troop concentrations, where the warhead’s sheer size would cause casualties over a wide area.
In 1978, a conventional submunition warhead entered service, primarily for export customers. The US Army also used conventional Lances, but they were outnumbered about 3:1 by the nuclear variant. About this time, work on the W-70 Mod3 neutron bomb warhead also started. This was canceled by the Carter administration, but revived and completed by the Reagan administration in 1981. However it was never actually fielded.
In 1991 President George HW Bush ordered the immediate retirement of Lance, which was completed in 1992. Many were expended as targets for Patriot SAM training; as late as 2007 some still remain for this role. The last export user was the UK, discarding Lance in late 1994.

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Users: United States (Army), Belgium, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom, West Germany

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