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# North Korea missiles can reach Guam in 14 minutes, local official says

Shawn Raymundo, [sraymundo@guampdn.com](mailto:sraymundo@guampdn.com)

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(Photo: Staff Sgt. Joshua Smoot/U.S. Air, Pacific Air Forces Public Affair)

If North Korea fires missiles toward Guam, they would take about 14 minutes to reach the island, said [Guam Homeland Security](http://ghs.guam.gov/) (<http://ghs.guam.gov/>) spokeswoman Jenna Gaminde.

She said residents would be immediately notified by the 15 [All-Hazards Alert Warning System sirens](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2015/06/12/guam-sirens-testing-0612/71107866/) ([/story/news/2015/06/12/guam-sirens-testing-0612/71107866/](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2015/06/12/guam-sirens-testing-0612/71107866/)), located in low-lying areas throughout the island.

North Korea announced Thursday that the nation has a detailed [plan for a missile strike](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/08/09/north-korea-examining-missile-launch-toward-guam/554334001/) ([/story/news/2017/08/09/north-korea-examining-missile-launch-toward-guam/554334001/](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/08/09/north-korea-examining-missile-launch-toward-guam/554334001/)) near Guam using four intermediate-range ballistic rockets.

"Our office will be notified from the military and will utilize all forms of mass communication to get the message out to the public," Gaminde said. Local media, village mayors and social media would be used to disseminate information, she said.

"If you hear the sirens, tune into local media — radio, print, television — for further instructions," Gaminde said.

## Four rockets

North Korea said under the plan, four Hwasong-12 rockets would fly over Shimane, Hiroshima and Koichi prefectures in Japan, hitting waters 19 to 25 miles from the island, the Associated Press reported. The plan could be sent to leader Kim Jong Un for approval within a week or so.

Greg Kuntz, acting public affairs director for Joint Region Marianas, said the military on island continues to maintain standard operations amid threats from North Korea.

"We always maintain a high state of readiness," Kuntz said. "We're maintaining normal operations."

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Local and federal officials said there's no change in threat level and all operations continue as normal.

Kuntz said that nothing has changed in terms of Joint Region Marianas' procedures when it comes to communications between the military and dependents.

Gov. Eddie Calvo and Guam Homeland Security Advisor George Charfauros on Wednesday noted the defense systems put in place in the region, such as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, missile system permanently stationed at Andersen Air Force Base.

## Previous threats

Guam's faced previous threats of a rocket attack from North Korea, which has been [conducting frequent tests](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/05/15/north-korea-buoyed-successful-test-says-its-nukes-can-reach-us/101702216/) ([/story/news/2017/05/15/north-korea-buoyed-successful-test-says-its-nukes-can-reach-us/101702216/](http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/05/15/north-korea-buoyed-successful-test-says-its-nukes-can-reach-us/101702216/)) of its nuclear missile capability. Most recently, in March 2013, North Korean military officials made a statement about Andersen Air Force Base being within "striking range."

In October 2006, an unofficial spokesman for North Korea in Japan told ABC Radio Australia that Guam, Japan and Hawaii were potential targets if the U.N. levied tougher sanctions against North Korea.

Carl Peterson, president of Money Resources Inc., serves on the Guam Chamber of Commerce's Armed Forces Committee, expressed confidence in the U.S. military's defense capabilities.

"I don't think there's anything to worry about. No missile is going to land on Guam," Peterson said Thursday. "We've got defense mechanisms in place ... they have the ability to seek out the missiles with kinetic energy and destroy it."

*(Story continues below video.)*

"(The North has) improved their missile launch capacity, but that's neither here nor there," he said. "If you're going to fire it at somebody, it's going to get shot down. Now they have more capacity for launching missiles, but in my view, no missile is going to hit Guam."

## Guam in spotlight

Island residents woke up Wednesday to national headlines of the North Korean missile threat, which came after President Donald Trump [said](https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/world/2017/08/08/report-north-korea-has-nuke-fits-inside-missile/549188001/) [//story/news/world/2017/08/08/report-north-korea-has-nuke-fits-inside-missile/549188001/](https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/world/2017/08/08/report-north-korea-has-nuke-fits-inside-missile/549188001/) "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States."

Trump told reporters from the clubhouse of his Bedminster, New Jersey golf course that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "has been very threatening beyond a normal state, and as I said they will be met with fire and fury and frankly power, the likes of which this world has never seen before."

U.S. tensions with North Korea and its ambitions to obtain a nuclear weapon have been a concern for the last four presidential administrations, Peterson noted. Regardless of who was in the White House, he said, diplomacy failed.

"It's gotten progressively worse over the last 20 years," Peterson said.

Trump's rhetoric toward North Korea has sparked criticism. Peterson said he reserves judgment, stating that everyone responds differently to a bully.

Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis on Wednesday echoed Trump's tough stance against the threats from the North, stating that a provocation would be met with the "destruction of its people."

## Global security threat

"The (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) must choose to stop isolating itself and stand down its pursuit of nuclear weapons," Mattis told the North Korea leader in a [Department of Defense press release](https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/1273247/statement-by-secretary-of-defense-jim-mattis/) (<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/1273247/statement-by-secretary-of-defense-jim-mattis/>). "The DPRK should cease any consideration of action that would lead to the end of its regime and the destruction of its people."

The U.S. and its allies, Mattis said, are capable of fending off an attack. He added that Kim Jong Un should "take heed of the" U.N.'s security council, which believes North Korea "poses a threat to global security and stability."

"While our State Department is making every effort to resolve this global threat through diplomatic means, it must be noted that the combined allied militaries now possess the most precise, rehearsed and robust defensive and offensive capabilities on Earth."

*Government Accountability Reporter Shawn Raymundo covers local politics and the territory's executive and legislative branches. Follow him on Twitter @ShawnzyTsunami and Instagram @Shawn\_Del\_Mundo. Follow Pacific Daily News on Facebook/GuamPDN (<http://www.facebook.com/guampdn/>) and Instagram @guampdn (<http://instagram.com/GuamPDN>).*

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