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Stealth Technology in Surface Warships: How This Concept Affects the Execution of the Maritime Strategy

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Abstract: Stealth or (low-observable) technology is currently being incorporated into many new and existing classes of surface warships. This effort to reduce the ship's radar cross section (RCS) is aimed primarily at improving survivability against radar homing, anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs). Stealth warships offer potential advantages (and disadvantages) for the operational decision makers in how they employ these ships in the execution of the National Military Strategy. This paper explores the capabilities and limitations of current efforts to employ stealth in surface ships and discusses how a warship with a much reduced RCS might better execute various naval missions. It was found that actual stealth performance data is highly classified, but much open source literature is available which addresses the technical concepts of stealth. In theory stealth, when employed with **chaff** decoys, has the potential to enhance surface warship defenses against present generation ASCMs. With the proliferation of modern ASCMs to the Third World, stealth warships with an 'improved' soft kill capability are better suited to conduct various sea control, power projection and crisis response missions than their non-stealth counterparts. STEALTH, RADAR CROSS SECTION, ANTI-SHIP MISSILE DEFENSE.

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