



# FACT SHEET

Office of the  
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**Deployment Health Support Directorate**

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## **Deseret Test Center Project SHAD**

### **Magic Sword**

Project Shipboard Hazard and Defense (SHAD) was part of the joint service chemical and biological warfare test program conducted during the 1960s. Project SHAD encompassed tests designed to identify US warships' and ashore installations' vulnerabilities to attacks with chemical or biological warfare agents and to develop procedures to respond to such attacks while maintaining a war-fighting capability.

The purpose of Magic Sword was to study the feasibility of an offshore release of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes and to obtain information on mosquito biting habits, mosquito trap technology, and operational and logistical problems associated with the delivery of mosquitoes to remote sites.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is a main vector for various infectious diseases, including dengue and yellow fevers.

Uninfected mosquitoes were released from the USS *George Eastman* (YAG-39), off the coast of Baker Island and traps were placed on the island as part of the test. As part of an onshore biting study, volunteers were placed at specific locations and a designated number of vectors were released centrally. Volunteers recorded the number of bites received.

A thermal fog generator was used to eradicate the mosquito population on the island at the conclusion of the test. Mosquitoes were eradicated aboard ship through a combination of high heat and insecticide.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is providing this information, at the request of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), to assist the VA in providing healthcare services to qualified veterans and to assist veterans in establishing service connection for disability claims. The Deployment Health Support Directorate (DHSD) collected this information from multiple sources and requested that the military services declassify it to allow its public distribution. The VA accepts this information provided on location, dates, units and/or ships, and substances involved in this exercise, which DHSD extracted from classified DoD records, and will provide it to individual veterans as necessary, but the VA cannot verify its accuracy.

The trials for Magic Sword were conducted in the Pacific Ocean, on or in the vicinity of Baker Island, during May 1965.

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<b>Test Name</b>	Magic Sword (DTC Test 65-4)
<b>Testing Organization</b>	US Army Deseret Test Center
<b>Test Dates</b>	May 1965
<b>Test Location</b>	In the Pacific Ocean, on or in the vicinity of Baker Island
<b>Test Operations</b>	To study the feasibility of an offshore release of <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes and to obtain information on mosquito biting habits, mosquito trap technology, and operational and logistical problems associated with the delivery of mosquitoes to remote sites.
<b>Participating Services</b>	US Navy, Deseret Test Center personnel
<b>Units and Ships Involved</b>	USS <i>George Eastman</i> (YAG-39)
<b>Dissemination Procedures</b>	Mosquitoes were released from the USS <i>George Eastman</i> near the coast of Baker Island.
<b>Agents, Simulants, Tracers</b>	Uninfected <i>Aedes aegypti</i> (mosquitoes).
<b>Ancillary Testing</b>	Not identified.
<b>Decontamination</b>	A thermal fog generator was used to eradicate the mosquito population on the island at the conclusion of the test. Mosquitoes were eradicated aboard ship through a combination of high heat and insecticide.
<b>Potential Health Risks Associated with Agents, Simulants, Tracers</b>	<u><i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes</u> <i>Aedes aegypti</i> mosquitoes used in this test were not infected. Health effects at the time would be the usual swelling and irritation associated with mosquito bites. No long-term or latent effects would be expected.

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