Boeing Laser Demonstrator Program Accepts Oshkosh Military Truck, Enters Fabrication Phase

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Jan. 6, 2010 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] announced today that it has accepted the Oshkosh Defense military truck that will carry a Boeing-built laser beam control system for the U.S. Army's High Energy Laser Technology Demonstrator (HEL TD) program.

Boeing received the Oshkosh Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) on Dec. 17 at the Oshkosh facility in Oshkosh, Wis.

"This demonstration program has successfully transitioned from the design phase to the fabrication phase," said Gary Fitzmire, vice president and program director of Boeing Missile Defense Systems' Directed Energy Systems unit. "This transformational, solid-state laser weapon capability will provide speed-of-light, ultra-precision capability that will dramatically improve warfighters' ability to counter rocket, artillery and mortar projectiles."

The eight-wheel, 500-horsepower HEMTT A4, a widely used military tactical vehicle, will be shipped to Boeing's facility in Huntsville this spring for integration with the laser's rugged beam control system (BCS). The program has already begun receiving BCS components from suppliers.

"These hardware deliveries show that the program is making great progress and getting closer to demonstrating its revolutionary capability," said Blaine Beardsley, Boeing HEL TD program manager.

The BCS will acquire, track and select an aimpoint on a target during the same time frame in which the system also will receive the laser beam from the laser device, reshape and align it, and focus it on the target. The system includes mirrors, high-speed processors and high-speed optical sensors.

HEL TD testing against real targets, but using a low-power surrogate for the high-energy laser, is scheduled for fiscal year 2011 at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. HEL TD is a cornerstone of the Army's high-energy laser program and will support the transition to a full-fledged Army acquisition program.

Boeing is developing laser systems for a variety of U.S. Air Force, Army and Navy warfighter applications. Besides HEL TD, these systems include the Airborne Laser, Free Electron Laser and Tactical Relay Mirror System.

Oshkosh Defense, a division of Oshkosh Corporation, is an industry-leading global designer and manufacturer of tactical military trucks and armored wheeled vehicles.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32 billion business with 70,000 employees worldwide.

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