Boeing Accepts Delivery of Key Component for US Army's High Energy Laser Technology Demonstrator

PITTSBURGH, June 25, 2010 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] on June 24 took delivery of the beam director assembly for the U.S. Army's High Energy Laser Technology Demonstrator (HEL TD) program, moving the system another step closer to its 2011 testing schedule.

Integrated Optical Systems Brashear, a division of L-3 Communications, delivered the component in Pittsburgh for transport to Boeing's facility in Albuquerque, N.M., where it will be mated to the remaining beam control system hardware. Once assembled, the laser system will be integrated with an Oshkosh Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) in Huntsville, Ala.

The beam control system 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 HEL TD's laser device, reshape and align it, and focus it on the target. The system includes mirrors, high-speed processors and high-speed optical sensors.

"Watching this revolutionary capability come together through the efforts of Boeing employees and partners working with our U.S. Army customer reinforces how real -- and how close -- this technology is to being ready to support warfighters," said Blaine Beardsley, Boeing HEL TD program manager.

The transformational, solid-state laser weapon system will provide speed-of-light, ultra-precision capability that will dramatically improve warfighters' ability to counter rocket, artillery and mortar projectiles.

"We're confident in our ability to begin testing at White Sands Missile Range early next year against real targets," said Mike Rinn, vice president of Boeing Directed Energy Systems. "Using a low-power surrogate for the high-energy laser, we will demonstrate the transformational capability of this system and its potential for the battlefield."

These low-power tests will demonstrate the HEL TD system's ability to acquire, track and target moving projectiles. The HEMTT will later be equipped with a high-energy laser that can destroy those targets.

Boeing is developing laser systems for a variety of U.S. Air Force, Army and Navy applications. Besides HEL TD, these systems include the Free Electron Laser, the Tactical Relay Mirror System, and the latest Compact 3-D Imaging Camera.

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