Boeing Prepares to Install Beam Control System on High Energy Laser Technology Demonstrator

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Oct. 25, 2010 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today announced that its High Energy Laser Technology Demonstrator (HEL TD) team in Huntsville is installing subassemblies on the Oshkosh Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT), while a HEL TD team in Albuquerque, N.M., is integrating the laser beam director assembly with the beam control system. These technical integration tasks are being performed to prepare for installation of the beam control system on the HEMTT later this year.

HEL TD is a solid-state laser system demonstrator that will verify the ability to shoot down rockets, artillery and mortars. Boeing is developing the system under contract to the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command.

"We are applying the best of Boeing to deliver this ground-breaking technology to the warfighter as soon as possible," said Blaine Beardsley, Boeing HEL TD program manager. "The HEL TD program provides a great opportunity to apply the ultra-precision, speed-of-light benefits of directed energy that will dramatically improve our customer's defenses on the battlefield."

The subassemblies being installed on the eight-wheel, 500-horsepower HEMTT include a generator and heating, ventilation and air conditioning units. The vehicle also is equipped with a system enclosure, a structure that will hold much of its critical hardware, including the beam control system and beam director.

After installation of the beam control system onto the HEMTT, HEL TD will enter low-power system testing at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. These tests, scheduled for next year, 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.

HEL TD will acquire, track and select an aimpoint on a target; then the system 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.

Boeing is developing directed energy 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 Compact 3-D Imaging Camera.

Boeing is the largest aerospace company in Alabama and one of the state's largest employers. Current company operations in Huntsville include the Ground-based Midcourse Defense program and other missile defense work, such as the Arrow system and the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 seeker, as well as work associated with Ares I, the International Space Station, Army Integrated Logistics, Brigade Combat Team Modernization, SBInet, and engineering for the 787 and the P-8A Poseidon.

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