Boeing Thin Disk Laser Exceeds Performance Requirements During Testing

Demonstrates system's readiness for future military applications

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M., Aug. 13, 2013 -- The Boeing [NYSE: BA] Thin Disk Laser system, which integrates a series of high-power industrial lasers to generate one concentrated, high-energy beam, exceeded required thresholds for power and beam quality during a demonstration for the Department of Defense's Robust Electric Laser Initiative (RELI) effort.

The high-power, solid-state laser system output reached more than 30 kilowatts – nearly 30 percent more power than RELI requirements – while simultaneously measuring excellent efficiency.

A high-power, solid-state, directed energy weapon can provide pinpoint accuracy to precisely destroy or disable a target with little to no collateral damage. Directed energy weapons such as the Thin Disk Laser system will provide military customers with precision targeting for a variety of tactical missions.

"These demonstrations prove the military utility of laser systems," said Michael Rinn, Boeing Directed Energy Systems vice president and program director. "In order to be truly viable as a weapons-class system, a laser must achieve high brightness while simultaneously remaining efficient at higher power. Our team has shown that we have the necessary power, the beam quality, and the efficiency to deliver such a system to the battlefield."

The demonstrations were the first time the Boeing system simultaneously achieved high beam quality at high power. Combining these two factors results in a measure of brightness, and the brightness measured by the Boeing system is among the best measured to-date by anyone in the industry.

Solid-state lasers are powered by electricity, making them mobile and supportable on the battlefield. The Boeing system incorporates a series of commercial, solid-state lasers that have proven to be extremely reliable while requiring low levels of support and maintenance.

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