

TRW-Built High-Energy Laser Destroys Artillery Projectile in Flight; Shootdown Marks a Dramatic Technology Breakthrough

Redondo Beach, Calif. and White Sands, N.M. — Nov. 5, 2002 — Until today, nothing could stop an artillery projectile once it was fired. Now, in a world's first, a high-energy laser, developed by TRW (NYSE:TRW) for the U.S. Army and the Israel Ministry of Defense, has intercepted an artillery projectile and caused it to explode harmlessly in the air.

The shootdown took place during a live-fire test of the TRW-built Mobile Tactical High-Energy Laser (MTHEL) testbed, conducted by the U.S. Army, at its White Sands Missile Range.

“This shootdown shifts the paradigm for defensive capabilities. We've shown that even an artillery projectile hurtling through the air at supersonic speed is no match for a laser,” said Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Cosumano, Jr., Commanding General, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command and Army Space Command. “Tactical high-energy lasers have the capacity to change the face of the battlefield.”

The shootdown occurred as part of a new series of tests to determine MTHEL requirements and demonstrate the system's capabilities against a wide range of airborne targets. In earlier tests during 2000 and 2001, the testbed — then called the THEL/Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrator — focused on the threat of artillery rockets and succeeded in shooting down 25 Katyusha rockets, fired singly and in salvos.

“TRW's THEL technology is now proven against both short-range rockets and artillery projectiles. With this test, MTHEL further substantiates its potential to protect soldiers and key assets against attack by a variety of air threats,” said Tim Hannemann, president and CEO of TRW Space & Electronics. TRW developed the MTHEL testbed under contract to the U.S. Army, for the joint US Army and Israel Ministry of Defense THEL ACTD program. “We look forward to producing a prototype of a truly mobile version and operational tactical laser weapon as the MTHEL program gets underway.”

Live action video footage of the artillery firing and laser beam pointer is available at:

15:30-15:45 p.m. and 16:30-16:45 p.m. (EST)

Satellite AM02 C-Band

Transponder 11

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85 degrees West Longitude

3920 MHz Vertical Polarity

Audio Sub-carrier 6.2/6.8

TRW Space & Electronics, headquartered in Redondo Beach, Calif., is a world leader in the development of high-energy lasers, space systems and integrated avionics. TRW provides advanced-technology products and services for the aerospace, systems and automotive markets. Company news releases can be found at <http://www.trw.com>.

NOTE TO EDITORS: To obtain the latest MTHEL test bed news and still images, or to obtain background information on lasers and the THEL/MTHEL programs, please visit TRW's electronic THEL press kit at http://www.trw.com/presskits/detailinfo/0,1067,2_12^2^12^23,FF.html.

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