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RAY GUNS

Northrop Grumman Develops Skyguard Laser Defense System For Local Defense

by Staff Writers

Redondo Beach CA (SPX) Jul 13, 2006

Northrop Grumman has developed the Skyguard laser-based air defense system for U.S. government agencies and allies that require near-term defense against short-range ballistic missiles, short- and long-range rockets, artillery shells, mortars, unmanned aerial vehicles and cruise missiles.



Skyguard - the high-power laser system which will defend against air-based threats such as short-range ballistic missiles and rockets, artillery and mortars. Photo credit: Northrop Grumman Artwork.

Skyguard is derived from the successful Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL) test bed and its predecessors developed by Northrop Grumman for the U.S. Army and the Israel Ministry of Defence. Benefiting from significant technological advancements, Skyguard has higher power than heritage systems and a larger beam, making it a much more capable system, the company said.

"We believe that no other weapon of any kind, or any system being developed today, can offer the kind of protection we've proven Skyguard can provide," said Alexis Livanos, president, Northrop Grumman Space Technology. "Skyguard offers the earliest possible implementation of an operational laser weapon system for defense against a wide range of threats."

Like earlier systems developed by Northrop Grumman, Skyguard is a multi-mission, soldier-operated, compact and transportable laser weapon system designed for field deployment and operations.

A single Skyguard system can defend deployed forces, a large military installation, and/or a large civilian population or industrial area. One Skyguard system is capable of generating a protective shield of about 10 kilometers in diameter.

"The THEL Testbed has demonstrated unequivocally that lasers can engage and destroy rocket, artillery and mortar threats in flight," noted Mike McVey, vice president of Northrop Grumman's Directed Energy Systems business area.

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"This test bed has been remarkably successful. To date, it has shot down dozens of live threats, including long- and short-range rockets, mortars and artillery projectiles, in very realistic attack scenarios, and under simulated operational conditions such as surprise attacks and mixed threats."

In continuous use at the Army's White Sands Missile Range since it was developed between 1996 and 2000, the THEL Testbed has proven that laser weapons could be applied on the battlefield to protect troops on the ground.

Like the THEL Testbed, Skyguard is a modular and flexible system that will support future spiral developments and can accommodate improved laser and beam control technologies as they become available.

Northrop Grumman Space Technology has been developing and demonstrating high-energy lasers for more than 30 years, paving the way for the U.S. to incorporate defensive lasers across all military services - including ships, manned and unmanned aircraft, and ground vehicles - and to meet homeland security needs.

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RAY GUNS

THAAD System Intercepts Live Missile Target



Dallas TX (SPX) Jul 13, 2006

Lockheed Martin announced Wednesday that its latest test of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense weapon system either met or exceeded all objectives in intercepting a missile target. THAAD is designed to defend U.S. troops, allied forces, population centers and critical infrastructure against short- to intermediate range ballistic missiles.

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