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## **NFIRE Laser Communications Terminal Delivered to MDA**

Air Force Lt. General Henry "Trey" Obering, III, Missile Defense Agency (MDA) director, today announced the delivery of the laser communication terminal (LCT) from Tesat-Spacecom to General Dynamics C4 Systems, in Gilbert, Ariz. The LCT will be installed on the Near Field Infrared Experiment (NFIRE) satellite as a secondary payload to evaluate laser communication technology. The primary mission of the NFIRE satellite is to collect images of a boosting rocket to improve understanding of exhaust plume phenomenology and plume-to-rocket body discrimination. The MDA will use this data to validate and update the models and simulations that are fundamental to missile defense applications.

The LCT was developed by Tesat-Spacecom and is provided by the German government as part of a cooperative agreement between the United States and Germany. The goal of this agreement is to conduct communication experiments with the German TerraSAR-X satellite and the German Space Operations Center. These experiments will test low earth orbit satellite-to-satellite and satellite-to-ground capabilities of the terminal.

The NFIRE satellite is expected to be launched on a Minotaur launch vehicle from Wallops Island, Va. in Spring 2007.

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