



News Release

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Airborne Laser Ready for High Energy Laser Integration and Testing

Lt. General Henry A. "Trey" Obering, Director of the Missile Defense Agency, announced today the successful completion of the Airborne Laser (ABL) program's final 2007 Knowledge Point. Completion of this Knowledge Point culminates a year of historic progress for the ABL program, and marks the end of a complex and diverse set of hardware refurbishment and planning in preparation for installation of ABL's megawatt-class High Energy Laser on board the prototype aircraft at Edwards Air Force Base.

Initial laser integration work began last summer after completion of a flight test program that demonstrated ABL's ability to detect, track, target and engage non-cooperative airborne targets. This latest milestone verifies all High Energy Laser components have been readied for installation, and key chemical support systems have been put in place in preparation for on-aircraft integration and laser testing in 2008.

ABL is being developed as a future component of the nation's layered Ballistic Missile Defense System. It is poised to become the first directed energy weapon to destroy a ballistic missile in flight, with a full system demonstration scheduled for late 2009.

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