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Rheinmetall demonstrates laser weapons

by Staff Writers
 Kiel, Germany (UPI) Nov 23, 2011

German company Rheinmetall Defense says it has successfully combined a powerful laser weapon with an advanced air defense system.

The demonstrator systems were recently tested at a proving ground in Switzerland, the company said, and downed an unmanned aerial vehicle used as a target and engaged and defeated other threats as well.

"Having recently used a high-energy laser weapon to down an unmanned aircraft at a proving ground in Switzerland, Rheinmetall has demonstrated the operational potential of combining a powerful laser weapon with an advanced air defense system," Rheinmetall said in a news release.

"This event provides compelling proof of the (Rheinmetall) group's 360-degree competence in relevant technologies -- ranging from military lasers and target recognition and identification, to target tracking and fire control units -- and its unrivalled ability to weld them into a single, forward-looking, fully functional full-scale demonstrator."

The live-fire laser demonstration was conducted at Rheinmetall's Ochsenboden proving ground.

One weapon system -- two 5-kilowatt laser weapon modules -- was integrated into an air defense system using an Oerlikon Skyguard 3 fire control unit and a Skyshield gun turret. The second, a 1-kW laser weapon module, was mounted on a TM 170-type vehicle.

Both laser weapon demonstrators were used in different scenarios: protecting against asymmetric, terrorist-type threats; countering incoming rockets, artillery and mortar rounds; and defending against an aircraft target.

Rheinmetall said the 1-kW laser weapon demonstrator successfully sank



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a moving rubber raft (substituting as a speedboat) and was also effective in destroying improvised explosive devices and in neutralizing unexploded ordnance.

In the artillery, mortar and rocket scenario, the 10-kW laser demonstrator showed that the doubling the laser output from the 5-kW of the 2010 design improved performance and reduced the time to engage a target by half.

The 10-kW weapon in the anti-aircraft scenario successfully detected, tracked, engaged and destroyed a UAV in flight.

The live-fire demonstration at the Ochsenboden proving ground, the company said, shows the company has the skill and expertise to develop complex laser weapon systems.

Rheinmetall said it expects to have a 100-kW a laser weapon system available for customers in three to five years but, even today, the modular, scalable design of the lasers demonstrated are able to meet a variety of military weapon requirements.

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LockMart Directed Energy Leader Receives Purdue's Outstanding Aerospace Engineer Award

Sunnyvale CA (SPX) Oct 25, 2011

Paul Shattuck, Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company's director for directed energy systems, received a 2011 Outstanding Aerospace Engineer (OAE) Award from Purdue University's School of Aeronautics and Astronautics at a ceremony in West Lafayette. "The members of the faculty are very proud of Paul's accomplishments," said Tom I-P. Shih, professor and head of the school. "He is a positive ... read more



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