

General Atomics, Boeing Partner on High-Energy Laser Weapon System



An artist's conception of the High Energy Laser weapon system.
General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) and Boeing are partnering to jointly pursue opportunities for a 100 kW-class scalable to 250 kW-class High Energy Laser (HEL) weapon system to support a variety of air and missile defense applications, the companies announced in an Oct. 13 release. The partnership combines both companies' expertise in directed energy to build a best-in-class HEL solution capable of delivering superior, combat-ready protection for the warfighter on an accelerated timeline.

The HEL weapon system will combine GA-EMS' scalable distributed gain laser technology, HELLi-ion battery systems and integrated thermal management with Boeing's beam director and precision acquisition, tracking and pointing (ATP) software. In addition to meeting the high-output power, range, adaptability and precision ATP requirements necessary to defeat an increasing array of emerging threats, the HEL weapon system's compact footprint will offer a reduced logistics footprint and greater configurability for both stand-alone use and integration with a variety of mobile ground, sea and air-based platforms.

"GA-EMS has made significant advancements in developing and demonstrating highly scalable laser technologies to facilitate high output power in smaller, lighter weight packages," said Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. "We look forward to working with Boeing to deliver a laser weapon system with capabilities designed to meet current operational requirements, while

providing the flexibility and adaptability to suit emerging platform requirements supporting missions across a multi-domain battlespace.”

“Our partnership with General Atomics will deliver an innovative HEL force protection capability to the warfighter that is capable of supporting future needs and modernization objectives,” said Norm Tew, Boeing Missile and Weapon Systems vice president and general manager, and Huntsville site senior executive. “Together, we’re leveraging six decades of directed energy experience and proven, deployed technologies to rapidly field a next-generation solution with unmatched precision, performance, safety and affordability.”