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Front Matter: Volume 9650

, "Front Matter: Volume 9650," Proc. SPIE 9650, Technologies for Optical Countermeasures XII; and High-Power Lasers 2015: Technology and Systems, 965001 (29 October 2015); doi: 10.1117/12.2217605

SPIE.

Event: SPIE Security + Defence, 2015, Toulouse, France

PROCEEDINGS OF SPIE

Technologies for Optical Countermeasures XII; and High-Power Lasers 2015: Technology and Systems

**Harro Ackermann
Willy L. Bohn
David H. Titterton
Robert J. Grasso
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Editors

**21, 23–24 September 2015
Toulouse, France**

Sponsored by
SPIE

Cooperating Organisations
European Optical Society
Optitec (France)
Route des Lasers (France)

Published by
SPIE

Volume 9650

Proceedings of SPIE 0277-786X, V. 9650

SPIE is an international society advancing an interdisciplinary approach to the science and application of light.

Technologies for Optical Countermeasures XII; and High-Power Lasers 2015: Technology and Systems, edited by Harro Ackermann, Willy L. Bohn, David H. Titterton, Robert J. Grasso, Mark A. Richardson, Proc. of SPIE Vol. 9650, 965001 · © 2015 SPIE · CCC code: 0277-786X/15/\$18 · doi: 10.1117/12.2217605

Proc. of SPIE Vol. 9650 965001-1

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Author(s), "Title of Paper," in *Technologies for Optical Countermeasures XII; and High-Power Lasers 2015: Technology and Systems*, edited by Harro Ackermann, Willy L. Bohn, David H. Titterton, Robert J. Grasso, Mark A. Richardson, Proceedings of SPIE Vol. 9650 (SPIE, Bellingham, WA, 2015) Six-digit Article CID Number.

ISSN: 0277-786X

ISSN: 1996-756X (electronic)

ISBN: 9781628418606

Published by

SPIE

P.O. Box 10, Bellingham, Washington 98227-0010 USA

Telephone +1 360 676 3290 (Pacific Time) · Fax +1 360 647 1445

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Introduction to Part B: Technologies for Optical Countermeasures

This was the twelfth time we have held this conference, conducted over two days, and offered a range of papers pertinent to Electro-Optical and Infrared Countermeasures. As in the past, we also held our panel discussion debating the topic of "IRCM – Back to the Future". This discussion is very popular and caused some very interesting discussion, especially when the topic of "where do we move from here and how do we get there given technology and cost constraints" was raised.

This year's conference had five sessions, which focused upon Aircraft Protection, Laser Technology, and Atmospheric, Platform, and Signature Effects. There were two exceptional papers in the keynote session, which addressed "Semiconductor Lasers for DIRCM" and "Advancement in High Power MIR Sources." In the following sessions there were invited presentations covering Pre-emptive DIRCM System Architectures, Helicopter Rotor Downwash Effects, and High Energy Laser Propagation Effects. Of particular interest was our session on, "Atmospheric and External Platform Effects upon Laser Propagation." Here we had two excellent papers dealing with "Experimental and Numerical Analysis of Propagation of High-Energy Beams," and "Helicopter Engine Exhaust Rotor Downwash Effects on Laser Beams." Both of these papers deal with what we get at the end of the propagation chain once rotor downwash effects, atmospheric propagation effects, and absorption and scattering take their toll on our otherwise perfect beam emanating from our system.

We wish to thank all of the presenters for delivering an outstanding conference; moreover, we also thank the Programme Committee for their continued support and willingness to chair the various sessions, which is also appreciated by SPIE. The chairmen encouraged the audience to consider topics for discussion at next year's conference and symposium, which will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland.

David H. Titterton
Robert J. Grasso
Mark A. Richardson