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Contents

SYSTEMS AND POINTER TRACKERS II

NON-LINEAR MATERIALS FOR OCM

ANALYSIS AND SIMLUATION

Conference Committee

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David H. Titterton, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (United Kingdom)

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Mark R. G. Taylor, Defence Science and Technology Organisation (Australia)
Jonathan A. Terry, University of St. Andrews (United Kingdom)
Hans D. Tholl, Diehl BGT Defence GmbH & Company KG (Germany)

Session Chairs

1 Keynote Session
Mark A. Richardson, Cranfield University (United Kingdom)

2 Laser Technology for OCM
David H. Titterton, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (United Kingdom)

3 Systems and Pointer Trackers I
Brian Butters, Chemring Countermeasures (United Kingdom)

4 Laser Beam Propagation
Stuart S. Duncan, SELEX Sensors and Airborne Systems Ltd. (United Kingdom)

Introduction

The purpose of this conference was to provide a technical forum for the discussion and dissemination of information on optical, electro-optical, and infrared technologies as applied to the countermeasure role in security and defence.

Since the polished shields of antiquity that were used to reflect the sun into the enemies' eyes, optics and optical systems have been used on the battlefield as a cost-effective countermeasure. The simplest modern optical countermeasure techniques can still be extremely inexpensive in comparison with the platform/weapon system that they protect. Take for example the humble infrared flare ejected from the multi-million dollar aircraft, and the smoke screen deployed to protect an armoured fighting vehicle or column of vehicles. More sophisticated defensive aid systems are being developed that can encompass sensor systems, tracking systems, active and passive countermeasures, and sophisticated control and processing systems. It was all of these techniques and their underlying technologies, from the simple to the complex, which this conference aimed to address.

The conference content was even higher than last year, with 30 quality papers squeezed into the one and a half days available. Interest and attendance were high throughout; the conference room was usually full, with some people having to stand for some of the sessions. The importance of the laser in countermeasure technologies was evident by the fact that three of the sessions were focused on laser systems. Additionally, there were two sessions on systems and pointer trackers and a general session on analysis and simulation.

The conference kicked off with an excellent keynote address on the progress and development of high-energy laser sources from the U.S. Department of Defense, High-Energy Laser Joint Technology Office, and each session typically started with an invited paper. All of the papers were well received and each created significant interest and subsequent questioning.

We, therefore, commend the following papers to your attention and invite you to advance the topic of Technologies for Optical Countermeasures even further by submitting your research and development work for consideration in next year's conference.

David H. Titterton
Mark A. Richardson