



New Energy Center to Impact Future Weapons for Naval and Joint Forces

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DAHLGREN, Va. (NNS) -- The Navy demonstrated its commitment to "game-changing" directed energy technological programs at the Naval Directed Energy Center (NDEC) ribbon cutting ceremony held at Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren Division (NSWCDD) Sept. 10.

The focus of activity in the new building will be directed energy systems and applications, which use electromagnetic energy to project military force and augment conventional capabilities.

"This ribbon-cutting celebrates NAVSEA'S (Naval Sea Systems Command) investment in the Navy's future," said NSWC Dahlgren Division Commander Capt. Sheila Patterson. "This new Naval Directed Energy Center will double the space available for developing our directed energy programs and provide laboratories, computing spaces and offices to help us get the latest technology to our warfighters as soon as possible and protect them from harm's way."

Military officials foresee NDEC as the Navy's center of excellence for directed energy where complex systems engineering and integration problems can be solved and cutting edge solutions made a reality for U.S. troops.

Directed energy systems offer unique alternatives to traditional kinetic weapons such as guns and bombs because a myriad of targets can be engaged with more precision and variable effects.

"Directed Energy Weapons are a critical game-changing technology for the Navy-Marine Corps Team," said James Thomsen, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. "It's a technology that we need to understand better. We need to develop it and use it wisely."

"The standing up of the Naval Directed Energy Center is a perfect example of how Dahlgren is leading the way in developing and fielding directed energy warfare solutions, technologies and systems for our Sailors and Marines," said Susan Hudson, NSWC Dahlgren Electromagnetic and Sensor Systems Department Head.

"Our team of government employees, academia and contractors are harnessing various directed energy disciplines in order to develop systems that will enhance what's available to warfighters in order to achieve mission success in the changing operational environment."

The facility is the first in a series of planned construction projects designed to accommodate increasing directed energy activity at Dahlgren.

Moreover, NSWCDD technologists have been making a difference in directed energy research and development throughout the decades. Their understanding – and discoveries – led to the methodologies behind the electromagnetic launch of projectiles using stored electrical energy. These methodologies are critical to the evolution of the Railgun Program.

"Our scientists well understand that the introduction of directed energy weapons into 21st century naval forces has the potential to change naval tactics as fundamentally as computers have changed the way we work and communicate," said Patterson.

As the global security environment becomes increasingly complex and challenging for U.S. defense, NSWC Dahlgren's Directed Energy Warfare Office (DEWO) provides alternative and wide ranging deterrent options for U.S. Naval Forces and Combatant Commanders. DEWO options range from high energy lasers and high power microwaves to directed energy initiatives that counter improvised explosive devices.

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