Harnessing American Ingenuity

News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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DARPA URBAN CHALLENGE SITE VISITS ANNOUNCED

53 Teams Advance in Qualification Process

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) today announced that 53 of the initial 89 teams will advance to the next stage in the selection process for DARPA's Urban Challenge. The 53 teams are listed on the attached page.

In June, DARPA personnel will conduct site visit tests at locations across the U.S. to assess the ability of each team's autonomous vehicle to perform tasks operate safely. Vehicles will be evaluated on their ability to navigate a test course including a four-way intersection and moving traffic. This evaluation covers a subset of the abilities robots will require to complete the Urban Challenge course, including merging into moving traffic, navigating traffic circles, negotiating busy intersections, and avoiding obstacles.

"We have seen a dramatic increase in vehicle capabilities since the first Grand Challenge," observed DARPA Director Dr. Tony Tether, who added, "The ingenuity and dedication of these teams and the growth of the community in this area are phenomenal."

DARPA will use the site visit evaluation to select the semi-finalists, the top 30 teams that will participate in the National Qualification Event (NQE), October 21-31. This list of semi-finalists and the location of the NQE and Urban Challenge will be announced on August 10, 2007.

"We are requiring more and more complex behaviors at each stage of the competition," noted Dr. Norman Whitaker, Urban Challenge program manager. "Site visits will be the first real test with moving traffic."

The Urban Challenge is the third in a series of DARPA-sponsored competitions to foster the development of robotic ground vehicle technology without a human operator, designed for use on the battlefield. The Urban Challenge, set for November 3, 2007, will feature autonomous ground vehicles executing simulated military supply missions safely and

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effectively in a mock urban area. Safe operation in traffic is essential to U.S. military plans to use autonomous ground vehicles to conduct important missions and keep American personnel out of harm's way. DARPA will award $2 million, $1 million and $500,000 awards to the top three finishers that complete the course within the six-hour time limit.

The inaugural Grand Challenge was held in March 2004 over a 142-mile desert course. Fifteen autonomous ground vehicles attempted the course, but no vehicle finished. Only 19 months later, in October 2005 at the second Grand Challenge, four autonomous vehicles successfully completed a 132-mile desert route under the required 10-hour limit. DARPA awarded a $2 million prize to "Stanley" from Stanford University.

The teams selected for site visits and the teams' home towns are listed below:

Team 23 Racing	San Diego, Calif.
Team Annie Way	Karlsruhe, Germany
Austin Robot Technology	Austin, Texas
Team Autonomous Solutions	Young Ward, Utah
AvantGuardium	Bethesda, Md.
Axion Racing	Westlake Village, Calif.
The Ben Franklin Driving Team	Philadelphia, Pa.
Berkeley-Sydney Racing Team	Berkeley, Calif.
Team Berlin	Berlin, Germany
A Bunch of Dropouts	Kingman, Ariz.
BYUC	Provo, Utah
Team Caltech	Pasadena, Calif.
Team CajunBot	Lafayette, La.
CarOLO	Braunschweig, Germany
Team CART	Princeton, W. Va.
Team Case	Cleveland, Ohio
Team Cornell	Ithaca, N.Y.
Team Cybernet	Ann Arbor, Mich.
DOT MOBIL Team	Boran sur Oise, France
Gator Nation	Gainesville, Fla.
The Golem Group, LLC	Santa Monica, Calif.
Team Grand Challenger	Houston, Texas
Team Gray	Metairie, La.
Highlander Racing	Newark, N.J.
Insight Racing	Cary, N.C.
Intelligent Vehicle Systems	Minneapolis, Minn.
Team Jefferson	Crozet, Va.
Team Juggernaut	Sandy, Utah
Team-LUX	Hamburg, Germany
Martian Mentors	Goodrich, Mich.
Team MEXICO	Puebla, Mexico
Team MIT	Cambridge, Mass.
Mojavaton	Grand Junction, Colo.
TeamNOVA	Chickasha, Okla.
Ody-Era	Carmel, Ind.
Team Orange	Urbana, Ill.

Team Oshkosh	Oshkosh, Wisc.
OSU-ACT	Columbus, Ohio
Pegasus	College Station, Texas
Princeton University	Princeton, N.J.
SciAutonics/Auburn Engineering	Thousand Oaks, Calif.
Team Scorpion	Tucson, Ariz.
Stanford Racing Team	Palo Alto, Calif.
Sting Racing	Atlanta, Ga.
Tartan Racing	Pittsburgh, Pa.
Trobo	Petal, Miss.
True Vision Robotics	Atascadero, Calif.
UBC Thunderbird Robotics	Vancouver, Canada
Team UCF	Orlando, Fla.
Team Urbanator	Littleton, Colo.
University of Utah	Salt Lake City, Utah
UU	Westminster, Md.
Team Victor Tango	Blacksburg, Va.

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ABOUT DARPA

DARPA is the central research and development organization for the Department of Defense (DoD). The Agency manages and directs basic and applied research and development projects for DoD and pursues research and technology that provide dramatic advances in support of military missions.