



Harnessing American Ingenuity

News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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DARPA Finalizes 2007 Urban Challenge Cash Prize Levels *Top Three Finishers to Receive \$2 Million, \$1 Million and \$500,000 Prizes*

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) will give \$2 million, \$1 million and \$500,000 awards to the top three finishers that complete the course within the six-hour time limit in the 2007 DARPA Urban Challenge for autonomous robotic ground vehicles, competition organizers announced today.

DARPA's original cash prize authority for the first two Grand Challenges expired with the passage of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007. DARPA had planned to award trophies to the top three finishers in the Urban Challenge, but Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Kenneth J. Krieg approved \$2 million, \$1 million, and \$500,000 cash prizes for the first, second and third teams to complete the Urban Challenge's 60 miles within six hours.

"The Urban Challenge is quickly approaching," noted Dr. Norman Whitaker, DARPA's Urban Challenge program manager. "With less than a year until the National Qualification Event, teams will soon begin road-testing their vehicles."

The Urban Challenge will feature fully autonomous ground vehicles conducting simulated military supply missions safely and effectively in a mock urban area. The race will take place on November 3, 2007, at an undisclosed location in the western United States. Robotic vehicles will attempt to complete a 60-mile course through traffic in less than six hours operating under their own computer-based control, and the three fastest finishers will receive cash prizes. To succeed, vehicles must obey traffic laws while merging into moving traffic, navigating traffic circles, negotiating busy intersections, and avoiding obstacles.

DARPA's Grand Challenge has been successful in attracting enthusiasts from around the world to develop autonomous vehicle technology that will some day protect the lives of American men and women on the battlefield. Operation of autonomous vehicles in the Urban Challenge will test the ability of robots to operate safely and effectively in populated, busy areas.

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The DARPA Grand Challenge Website (www.darpa.mil/grandchallenge) is the primary source for information about the Urban Challenge event and includes the latest information on the event as well as information for participants.

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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.