

U.S. microwave-weapon tests revealed

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Precautions used to test U.S. military's microwave weapon ADS for crowd control have raised questions about its safety, says a report.

The New Scientist says volunteers used in the test of the Active Denial System were banned from wearing glasses or contact lenses due to safety fears.

These precautions raise concerns about the ADS in real crowd-control situations, the New Scientist reported Friday.

The ADS fires a 95-gigahertz microwave beam, which is supposed to heat skin and to cause pain but no physical damage, the report said. Until now little information about its effects had been released.

However, details of the 2003 and 2004 tests have been obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by a group that campaigns against the use of biological and non-lethal weapons, the report said. The tests were done at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque.

The experimenters banned glasses and contact lenses to prevent eye damage to the subjects and in the second and third tests removed any metallic objects such as coins and keys to stop hot spots being created on the skin, the report said.

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