

TERAHERTZ TECH TO FIGHT TERROR

The University of Adelaide in Australia is holding a conference "to discuss the latest advances in T-ray technology"--T is for TeraHertz (THz). THz radiation falls between the microwave and optical regions on the electromagnetic spectrum.

AFP and the Australian AP have basic summaries of the technology coming out of the conference Down Under. THz technology has been in the news a lot lately, after a team from Rice University--my buddy Hadi's alma mater--accidentally discovered that metal wire can efficiently transport terahertz pulses, perhaps enlarging potential applications to include spectroscopy.

The overall interest in THz tech, however, is no accident. Noah blogged about a DARPA "crash research program to build a radar-esque sensor for spotting biotoxins" in January 2003, shortly after writing an article on spectral sensing for Tech Central Station.

THz rays can penetrate plastics, clothing, cardboard and semiconductors, permitting non-invasive imaging to improve security at places like sea- and airports. Think X-Ray vision, but for real. The technology was named one of the top ten innovations for the war on terror, by Gizmo.com .

--Jeffrey Lewis

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