

143



Laserfax The photo shows an Associated Press technician receiving a photograph prepared by means of a high speed, high resolution facsimile system known as Laserfax, so called because it employs a laser beam to scan the photo being sent. Laser scanning data is converted to electrical signals and transmitted to news bureaus within the Associated Press network via microwave radio or telephone lines. At the other end, another laser sweeps reconverted imagery onto a special, light-sensitive, dry silver paper. The paper is then heat processed to reproduce the photograph.

Although relatively new, Laserfax is in extensive service. It is manufactured in several models. One of them is the type used by the Associated Press, its news bureaus and affiliated newspapers, radio and television stations. Other models have been sold in large numbers to law enforcement agencies for transmitting high quality fingerprints and identification photos. Laserfax is also in service with the National Weather Service, which converts satellite imagery to weather photographs and relays them to local weather stations, television stations, newspapers and airlines.

#82

Manufactured by Harris Electronics Systems Inc., Melbourne, Florida, Laserfax incorporates NASA thermal control coating technology developed by Jet Propulsion Laboratory for use on spacecraft antennas; the coatings block absorption of solar radiation which would interfere with the antenna's proper operation.

Harris Electronics Systems, originally Radiation, Inc., reused the NASA technology in development of Laserfax. A NASA technical support package provided information about the thermal properties that could be expected of various coatings for the facsimile system's paper rollers; this information served as a design base for the infrared heat source used in developing the photo.

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