

# New Rules Follow ILDA's Proposal

## CDRH Scraps One-Mile Limit After Members Suggest Alternate Plan

*By Patrick Murphy, ILDA President*

I am pleased to announce a major victory for common sense and for ILDA. Just last month, U.S. regulators adopted new rules for outdoor laser shows that closely follow ILDA's recommendations. These new rules, designed to protect aircraft pilots from laser exposure, put to rest a proposed limit on beam power that would have drastically curtailed shows which have operated for years without complaint.

ILDA has worked closely with the "SAE G-10" aviation industry group to develop new rules for limiting laser power near airports. But when faced with the prospect of overly restrictive rules proposed in April, ILDA mem-

bers joined hands for the first time to roll back an ill-conceived regulation.

The threat of unfair regulation led directly to ILDA's setting up a legal defense fund. It was clear that we needed expert legal guidance, to prevent new concerns from possibly shutting down our industry. As described elsewhere in this issue (see p. 4), the fund helps ILDA resist any unwarranted actions or regulations.

### **ILDA Presence Important**

For now, it appears the situation has stabilized. Our success with the "three-mile rule" and our continuing presence at government meetings have prevented further encroachment of our rights to safely share the skies. New guidelines, which ILDA helped develop, are now in place. Briefly, the new rule states that the power of a laser beam must be below the distraction level (5 micro-

watts per square centimeter) after the beam has travelled three miles. The Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH) originally wanted a one-mile limit, stating that this was as far as a spotter could visually see an aircraft.

Within a few days of the CDRH's April proposal, the ILDA Board of Directors approved a letter protesting this move. We called for a much more reasonable three-mile limit. In addition, we showed our true concern for safety by calling for even more stringent measures on certain types of lasers, and by proposing that CDRH require spotters to have training (The CDRH has not yet acted on our other proposals).

Whether in the U.S. or overseas, displays that follow the latest guidelines will be both safe and spectacular. ILDA will continue to champion these crowd-pleasing outdoor shows.