

Effect of shielding conditions and laser-material interaction parameters on bead profile in laser powder bed fusion

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The advantage of laser drilling is its high material removal speed because of rapid heat transfer brought about by the high energy laser beam, while it also leads to poor hole circularity, tapering, relative large heat affected zones and thick recast layers. Electrical discharge machining (EDM) drilling technology can overcome the above disadvantages of laser drilling, but its processing speed is excessively slow. In this investigation, we combined laser drilling and EDM drilling together for drilling through holes in Ti6Al4V titanium alloy plates of 2 mm and 7 mm thickness, aiming to improve hole drilling quality and reducing drilling time. A picosecond laser with a 355 nm wavelength was used to produce pilot holes. Taper, recast, hole roundness, and drilling time were compared between laser drilling, EDM drilling, and EDM/laser hybrid drilling. The result indicated that the sequential laser and EDM drilling could reduce the drilling time by 50% compared with single EDM drilling and maintained acceptable hole quality.