Abstract Submitted for the MAR15 Meeting of The American Physical Society

Black-hole lasing action in laboratory Bose-Einstein condensates¹ YI-HSIEH WANG, TED JACOBSON, University of Maryland, MARK EDWARDS, Georgia Southern University, CHARLES W. CLARK, Joint Quantum Institute — A recent experiment ² infers the production of Hawking radiation in an analogue black-hole laser, which consists of a Bose-Einstein condensate of about 5,000 ⁸⁷Rb atoms in a trap with a translating potential step. In the co-moving reference frame the flow velocity of the condensate exceeds the sound speed in a region confined between two sonic points, the analogue black and white hole horizons. We report simulations of that experiment based on the zero-temperature Gross-Pitaevskii (GP) equation that are consistent with the reported experimental results. The simulations show exponential growth of oscillatory modes trapped between the horizons, with a power spectrum consistent with expectations from the Bogoliubov dispersion relation, which saturates after an initial period. Quantum Hawking radiation occurs spontaneously in the vacuum, but in the presence of a coherent state of phonons it takes on a classical form captured by the zero-temperature GP equation. The growth of the trapped modes results from repeated super-radiant scattering from the black hole horizon, associated with emission of Hawking radiation to the exterior that is not well-resolved in the simulation.

¹Supported in part by NSF grants PHY-1068761 and PHY-0822671 and the ARO Atomtronics MURI

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Date submitted: 14 Nov 2014 Electronic form version 1.4

²J. Steinhauer, Nature Physics 11, 864 (2014)