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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Apr 18, 2012

GA-ASI Unveils New Enhanced Endurance Designs for Predator B

Field Installable Kits to Extend Flight Endurance up to 42 Hours

NAVY LEAGUE SEA AIR SPACE, WASHINGTON – 18 April 2012 – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI), a leading manufacturer of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), tactical reconnaissance radars, and electro-optic surveillance systems, today announced the near-term availability of two extended endurance options for its Predator® B/MQ-9 Reaper fleet.

"We are continually seeking ways to improve our platforms, making them more relevant for our customers' emerging needs," said Frank W. Pace, president, Aircraft Systems Group, GA-ASI. "We've designed field retrofitable capabilities–lengthened wings, wing-borne fuel pods, and new heavy-weight landing gear–that greatly extend Reaper's already impressive endurance and range while further increasing its operational flexibility."

The results of GA-ASI's recent Endurance Enhancement Study, which was completed on Internal Research and Development (IRAD) funds, propose two different field installable kits that extend endurance without costly depot aircraft modifications:

- Option 1 optimizes the aircraft for Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) missions, adding two fuel pods to its existing 66 ft wings and heavy-weight landing gear, increasing endurance from 27 hours to 37 hours.
- Option 2 optimizes the aircraft for multi-purpose missions, replacing its current 66 ft wings with 88 ft wings, and adding two fuel pods and heavy-weight landing gear, increasing endurance from 27 hours to 42 hours for ISR-only.

Earlier this year, GA-ASI announced the availability of a new trailing arm design for the existing main landing gear on Predator B/MQ-9 Reaper. This "heavy-weight" landing gear increases the aircraft's landing weight capacity by 30 percent and its gross takeoff weight by approximately 12 percent, from 10,500 lb to 11,700 lb. The new landing gear is available as a field retrofit to all existing Predator B customers, with the capability subject to export restrictions.

Predator B is currently operational with the U.S. Air Force and Royal Air Force as the

MQ-9 Reaper and the Italian Air Force as MQ-9, with NASA as Ikhana, and with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as Predator B/Guardian. The aircraft is designed to perform multi-mission ISR and "Hunter-Killer" missions over land or sea, with more than 120 vehicles delivered since 2001.

High-resolution photos of Predator B/MQ-9 Reaper and line drawings of the proposed endurance enhancements are available from GA-ASI's media contact listed above.

About GA-ASI

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., an affiliate of General Atomics, delivers situational awareness by providing unmanned aircraft, radar, and electro-optic solutions for military and commercial applications worldwide. The company's Aircraft Systems Group is a leading designer and manufacturer of proven, reliable unmanned aircraft systems, including Predator A, Predator B, Gray Eagle®, and the new Predator C Avenger®. It also manufactures a variety of solid-state digital Ground Control Stations (GCS), including the next-generation Advanced Cockpit GCS, and provides pilot training and support services for UAS field operations. The Reconnaissance Systems Group designs, manufactures, and integrates the Lynx® Multi-mode Radar and sophisticated Claw® sensor control and image analysis software into both manned and unmanned aircraft. It also develops and integrates other sensor and communication equipment into manned ISR aircraft and develops emerging technologies in solid-state lasers, electro-optic sensors, and ultra-wideband data links for government applications. For more information, please visit www.ga-asi.com.

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