



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 16, 2012

GA-ASI and UK Partners Validate New Open Payload Architecture During Sovereign Payload Capability Demonstration

Demo Supports Independent Upgrade of Future Sovereign Payloads on Predator B

SAN DIEGO – 16 May 2012 – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI), a leading manufacturer of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), tactical reconnaissance radars, and electro-optic surveillance systems, along with SELEX Galileo (a Finmeccanica company) and Cobham Aviation Services (Cobham), today demonstrated a new open payload architecture during the Sovereign Payload Capability Demonstration (SPCD) held at GA-ASI's Gray Butte Flight Operations Facilities in Palmdale, Calif.

The event included a live flight demonstration over the Pacific Ocean of a GA-ASI Predator® B/MQ-9 Reaper UAS fitted with a SELEX Galileo Seaspray 7500E surveillance radar and showcased the radar's ability to track targets on land, in the littoral and maritime environments, and from air-to-air. An international audience was in attendance, including officials from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Ministries of Defense of the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and The Netherlands.

"Today's demonstration represents a significant step toward the goal of operational independence for Predator B," said Frank W. Pace, president, Aircraft Systems Group, GA-ASI. "Our open payload architecture greatly reduces integration complexity by allowing payload providers and mission systems integrators to develop their own payload control software and ultimately integrate their own payloads."

The SPCD is part of a joint Independent Research and Development (IRAD) effort between GA-ASI and SELEX Galileo to prove the concept and architecture for a fully certified Predator B incorporating a separate mission management system that supports the independent and cost-effective upgrade of future sovereign payloads. GA-ASI performed the software and hardware modifications to the Predator B system to implement the open payload architecture, while SELEX Galileo delivered the radar and supported the integration work. Cobham provides support to UK airworthiness procedures and through-life support as GA-ASI's teammate in the UK responsible for whole life support arrangements for the Royal Air Force's (RAF's) MQ-9 Reaper UAS.

"We're thrilled to be partnering with GA-ASI and Cobham on such a forward thinking programme. Customers don't want to be locked into particular payloads, they want the flexibility to integrate their own capabilities and sovereign control over the missions they fly," said Fabrizio Giulianini, CEO of SELEX Galileo, adding, "Today's demonstration was the first step in proving the concept of our platform and sensor-agnostic skylSTAR mission management system which will be flexible enough to meet the needs of any UAS programme going forward. To meet the demanding sensor requirements of these future UAS, our Seaspray radar exemplifies the foundation of advanced AESA technology that will allow us to provide high-resolution, multi-mode, multi-domain, and very wide-area coverage surveillance to users."

"Cobham is delighted to partner with GA-ASI and support this initiative by providing expertise to the airworthiness certification and sensor integration portions of this exciting program," said Peter Nottage, president of Cobham Aviation Services.

Initial testing of the new architecture was completed in September 2011, demonstrating the ability to host third party-developed payload control software on existing airborne and Ground Control Station (GCS) processors. Today's SPCD is the first phase in the flight demonstration process, with future phases envisioned to demonstrate systems integration independent of GA-ASI's involvement.

High-resolution photos from the demonstration are available upon request from GA-ASI's media contact listed below.

About the Companies

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.

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems UK Ltd (GA-UK) is an affiliated entity of GA-ASI. Based in London, GA-UK works with best-of-breed systems and support providers to enhance the capabilities of GA-ASI's Predator-series UAS. The company currently provides dedicated support for the UK Ministry of Defence's (MoD's) Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) requirements.

SELEX Galileo, a Finmeccanica company, is a leading player in defence electronics. The company employs over 7,000 people and operates mainly in three domestic markets: the UK, Italy, and the U.S. through dedicated legal entities. With a distinctive strength in airborne mission critical systems and a wide range of capabilities for the battlefield and for homeland security applications, SELEX Galileo is always offering the best solution to its customers. Further details can be obtained from www.selexgalileo.com.

Cobham specialises in meeting the demand for data, connectivity and bandwidth in defence, security and commercial environments. Offering a technically diverse and innovative range of technologies and services, the group protects lives and livelihoods, responding

to customer needs with agility that differentiates it. The most important thing it builds is trust. Employing more than 10,000 people on five continents, the group has customers and partners in over 100 countries.

Cobham Aviation Services provides specialist aviation solutions to defence, government and major commercial customers under long term performance-based contracts. This includes modern battlespace air warfare training for the UK armed forces and NATO, operating the largest border protection civil maritime surveillance contract in the world for the Australian Government, supporting a wide range of civil and military platforms with modification and through-life support, including the Sentry E3-D fleet and the Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft fleet of A330 aircraft for the UK MOD, providing air traffic control radar display software and aid calibration services to leading UK and European airports and with partner Bristow Helicopters training all helicopter pilots for the UK's Navy, Air Force and Army through the entity FB Heliservices. With a combined fleet of over 150 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, Cobham Aviation Services is a trusted partner worldwide.

Predator, Gray Eagle, Avenger, Lynx, and Claw are registered trademarks of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

Additional information on the demonstration may be obtained by contacting the following:

Solange Distefano Pozzuoli
SELEX Galileo
+39 335 7499374
solange.distefanopozzuoli@selexgalileo.com

John Stevenson
SELEX Galileo
+44 (0) 7540 628691
john.stevenson@selexgalileo.com

For more information contact:

Kimberly Kasitz
Public Relations Manager
General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.
+1.858.312.2294
kimberly.kasitz@ga-asi.com