

First Iraqi Air Force ISR Aircraft Passes ATP Testing

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems | Sep 25, 2008



SAN DIEGO: General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI), a leading manufacturer of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and tactical reconnaissance radars, today announced that under subcontract to Hawker Beechcraft Corporation (HBC) of Wichita, Kan., it has successfully passed acceptance test procedure (ATP) testing for the first of five Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft and related ground stations to be supplied to the Iraqi Air Force (IqAF) under the U.S. Government's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. The ISR aircraft and ground station met all requirements as witnessed by the U.S. Air Force FMS Program Office and HBC.

“The ISR package and fixed ground station met all technical specifications, with easy maintainability of the equipment also noted,” said Linden P. Blue, president, Reconnaissance Systems Group, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. **“Additionally, the ISR package is fully integrated and requires only one sensor operator onboard the aircraft to run the sensors and transmit the data to the fixed ground station.”**

The IqAF ISR ATP consisted of a series of test flights demonstrating the sensor and communications equipment aboard the modified Beechcraft King Air 350

Extended Range (ER) aircraft, including the L-3 Communications Wescam MX-15i electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) turret, L-3 Communications West mini-T series airborne data link, Exclusive Charter Services tailored sensor operator consoles, and GA-ASI CLAW integrated sensor software. The GA-ASI Lynx II synthetic aperture radar/ground moving target indicator (SAR/GMTI) was demonstrated and will be delivered this month after program modifications are made.

On the ground side, multiple man-transportable laptop video receivers and a fixed ground station (FGS) received real-time ISR data via data link communications from the aircraft from a considerable distance. The first ground station was shipped to Iraq immediately after testing, and the first aircraft departed for Iraq in late June.

Representing a total end-to-end airborne ISR solution, the equipment will increase current IqAF airborne reconnaissance and intelligence collection capabilities significantly. GA-ASI assembled and integrated the sensor and communications equipment onto the aircraft operator console station and the fixed ground station at its facilities in San Diego, Calif. The company recently completed sensor operator and maintenance training for U.S. and Iraqi Air Force operators and contract logistics support (CLS) personnel.

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., an affiliate of General Atomics, provides comprehensive unmanned aircraft and radar 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, and Sky Warrior, and provides pilot training and support services for UAS field operations. The Reconnaissance Systems Group designs, manufactures, and integrates the Lynx SAR/GMTI radar into both manned and unmanned aircraft, as well as the highly sophisticated CLAW sensor control and image analysis software, and integrates sensor and communications equipment into manned ISR aircraft.