

The year so far has been eventful for General Atomics with the demonstration flights for Japan completed in May. The GA-ASI also flew the first-ever trans-Atlantic flight of a Medium Altitude, Long-endurance (MALE) Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) using the new MQ-9B SkyGuardian. The flight originated in the United States and landed in the United Kingdom on July 11th.

The MQ-9B is the latest evolution of GA-ASI's multi-mission Predator B fleet and the company has named its baseline MQ-9B aircraft SkyGuardian, and the maritime surveillance variant SeaGuardian. The MQ-9B and Ground Control Station (GCS) are being built as a certifiable (STANAG 4671-compliant) RPAS. The MQ-9's development is the result of a five-year, company-funded effort to deliver a RPAS that can meet the stringent airworthiness and type-certification requirements of various civil authorities. Type-certification, together with an extensively tested collision avoidance system, will allow unrestricted operations in all classes of controlled and uncontrolled airspace.

"This historic flight demonstrated the endurance and civil airspace capability of our aircraft. In order to be approved to fly the trans-Atlantic route, GA-ASI had to coordinate with airspace authorities in the U.S., Canada and U.K. Completing the flight proves that broader acceptance of safety and efficiency of flying RPA in non-segregated airspace," said Joseph Song, VP, International Strategic Development for GA-ASI. Even though our first MQ-9B customers are in Europe, airworthiness and the ability to seamlessly integrate RPA into the airspace will benefit Japan and the global aviation community he added.

Apart from the demonstrations in Japan there are other milestones



## Flying RPA in Civil Airspace a Global Initiative for GA-ASI

that the company has achieved recently. The RPA completed the first flight of its Certifiable Ground Control Station (CGCS). To help achieve the goal of integrating RPAS into non-segregated national and international airspace, GA-ASI is producing a STANAG-compliant Ground Control Station.

The CGCS includes the same flight management system, cockpit displays, and navigation guidance as those found on modern corporate and commercial aircraft. The CGCS's hardware and software architecture provides separation of

flight and mission critical functions. This allows mission software to be modified without affecting flight critical software. The mission HMI is designed to provide situational awareness on a single tactical situation display. Avionics associated with the flight management system, including traffic collision avoidance, are certified under FAA Technical Standard Orders (TSO).

The upcoming test schedule for the CGCS includes Satellite launch and recovery, HMI enhancements, mission critical functions, and SATCOM datalink testing.

GA-ASI also received a Special Airworthiness Certification in the Experimental Category from the FAA for its second MQ-9B SkyGuardian aircraft in October. The company-owned Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) – registered as N191FP and known as YBC02 – joins the previously Special Airworthiness Certificated first SkyGuardian in support of the MQ-9B development program. This certification permits YBC02 to conduct flight operations in National Airspace (NAS) similar to a civil aircraft. ■

## U.S. AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE INDUSTRY EXHIBITS STRONG SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP

With sustained lift from advanced aircraft programs that have streamlined supply chains and strengthened alliances – notably the Lockheed Martin F-35 and Boeing 787 Dreamliner – the United States aerospace and defense industry is exhibiting a strong spirit of partnership at Tokyo Big Sight this week.

Some 45 U.S. companies – among the largest international contingents at the show – are presenting a wide range of innovative solutions for commercial and military aerospace manufacturing, assembly, operations and maintenance. A majority can be found in the USA Partnership Pavilion in East Hall 7, organized by Kallman Worldwide, Inc.

The Pavilion features 34 exhibitors representing 11 states, including the

state of Washington, which is hosting its own state-branded pavilion (Booth 7208) featuring state-based co-exhibitors within the larger U.S. space. Eight U.S. exhibitors are new to the show, and all are looking to generate new business and create jobs by growing exports, expanding in-region and/or recruiting Japanese partners to establish or participate in home-based operations.

"National pavilions are a patriotic expression of industry pride, presented in the spirit of global partnership," said Kallman. "America's presence at Japan Aerospace 2018, amplified by the USA Partnership Pavilion, is a strong indication of how important Japan is to U.S. aviation and aerospace suppliers, and that buyers and influencers here are also looking to the U.S. for innovative solutions and partners." ■