GA-ASI Successfully Demonstrates Lynx Maritime Mode on Aerostat

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems today announced its successful participation in a U.S. Air Force exercise designed to demonstrate the capability of an aerostat equipped with maritime radar and an Electro-optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensor to provide situational awareness for littoral environments.

“Successful integration and operation of the Lynx Multi-mode Radar on an aerostat, which presented many navigation system challenges, is a testament to the radar’s versatility,” said Linden Blue, president, Reconnaissance Systems Group, GA-ASI. “The exercise validated the robustness of the Lynx Maritime Wide Area Search [MWAS] mode and demonstrated that this capability is ready to transition to the military and border patrol users on various types of manned and unmanned aircraft.”

The flight test was conducted on July 26th during the U.S. Air Force Airborne Combat Command (ACC) Mobile Unified Communications (MUC) exercise held at Naval Air Station Oceana, Dam Neck Annex in Virginia Beach, Va. The SkySentry Aerostat, operated on behalf of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command Battle Lab (SMDCBL) and tethered approximately 1000 ft Above Ground Level (AGL), was equipped with the Lynx radar, an EO/IR camera, and a maritime Automatic Identification System (AIS). Lynx successfully detected and tracked maritime targets of various sizes and speeds off the Virginia Beach coastline. The radar detections and AIS data were correlated and displayed as a common operating picture overlay for improved operational situational awareness of maritime traffic flow and target identification. Lynx enabled operators to point the EO/IR camera automatically to targets of interest. The test demonstrated that the Lynx Multi-mode Radar is capable of providing situational awareness on relatively stationary airship/aerostat platforms, as well as on unmanned and manned fixed-wing aircraft.

Capable of a 30-degree per second scan rate with algorithms optimized for detecting small vessels, including Self-Propelled Semi-Submersible (SPSS) vessels, the Lynx radar’s MWAS mode has also been demonstrated successfully on a King Air aircraft and a surrogate Predator B UAS. The MWAS mode, along with a three-fold increase in the Ground Moving Target Indicator (GMTI) area coverage rate and a new SAR-aided alignment mode, has been incorporated into Lynx radars deployed by U.S. customers over the past year and is available now for airship/aerostat applications.

For more information, please visit www.ga-asi.com [1]

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