

Boeing, General Atomics Sign Agreement To Collaborate On Systems Integration

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Boeing [NYSE:BA] and General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc., have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will allow the two companies to discuss cooperation in the areas of unmanned systems, network-centric operations and other large-scale systems integration efforts.

The initial area of cooperation under the MOU will involve integrating the command and control architecture for General Atomics Aeronautical Systems' Predator unmanned aircraft system into both the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and the AH-64 Apache helicopter platforms. The ultimate goal is to "fuse" the disparate systems, and in turn increase connectivity and interoperability between manned and unmanned aircraft.

"Unmanned systems and network-centric operations, are extremely important to the transformation of the military," said Mike Heinz, Boeing vice president and general manager, deputy of Integrated Defense Advanced Systems (IDeAS). "We plan to rapidly develop and provide new technologies and system-of-system solutions to our customers that will meet their evolving needs with currently fielded and developing systems, and lead to major increases in operational effectiveness."

"This MOU constitutes a step forward in strategic planning, allowing each company a vehicle through which to communicate on potential business opportunities," said Thomas J. Cassidy, Jr., president and chief executive officer of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. "Establishing a working relationship with Boeing and other leading companies could have significant benefits for the customer, which is our ultimate goal. Interoperability between manned and unmanned systems will be key to making network centric a successful concept for the military."

Boeing and General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., a San Diego, Calif.-based leading manufacturer of unmanned aircraft surveillance systems, will also consider working together to identify, develop and capture other specific new business opportunities. The agreement also allows the companies to share relevant business development strategies and information to help anticipate evolving customer needs.

The Boeing Company is the world's leading aerospace company, with its heritage mirroring the history of flight. It is the largest manufacturer of satellites, commercial jetliners, and military aircraft. The company is also a global market leader in missile defense, human space flight, and launch services. Chicago-based Boeing has an extensive global reach with customers in 145 countries.

Founded in 1993, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. is the leading developer of proven and reliable remotely piloted aircraft systems for various customers throughout the world. General Atomics Aeronautical Systems has spearheaded acceptance of unmanned aircraft systems for military and commercial customers such as the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, NASA, Department of Energy and several overseas governments while leading the industry to new levels of performance and interoperability for network centric operations.

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