

AeroVironment Launches New Puma LE UAS



The new Puma LE unmanned aircraft. AeroVironment AeroVironment Inc. has launched the Puma LE (Long Endurance), the next generation in its Puma All Environment small unmanned aircraft system product line, the company said in an Oct. 14 release. The updated platform has increased range and expanded payload capacity, according to the company. Puma LE features an integrated Mantis i45 gimbaled electro-optical/infrared sensor and night-vision goggle-visible laser illuminator, to provide imagery for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) during day, night and low-light operations on land and in maritime environments.

Delivering Group 2 capabilities in a Group 1 footprint, the aircraft weighs 22.5 pounds (10.4 kilograms) and is launchable by hand or bungee. Onboard batteries provide 5.5 hours of flight endurance, doubling the time on station of Puma 3 AE, with an operational range of 60 kilometers when used with AeroVironment's Long-Range Tracking Antenna (LRTA). Puma LE's dual-case mission pack contains everything needed to perform two complete 5.5-hour missions with a single aircraft and ground control system.

According to AeroVironment, Puma LE is built for multimission operations with up to 5.5 pounds of total payload capacity. The aircraft's ruggedized secondary payload bay enables the integration of third-party payloads, with a dedicated power supply providing 18-24 volts at up to 5 amps, and an Ethernet connection port for payload communications.

"Puma LE is the next generation of the combat-proven Puma AE small UAS, delivering immediate tactical ISR, extended

endurance and a dedicated secondary payload bay to dramatically expand its mission capabilities,” said Rick Pedigo, vice president of sales and business development for AeroVironment. “With Puma LE, AeroVironment expands the envelope of small unmanned aircraft systems, and enables our customers to proceed with certainty in ever-changing operational environments.”

Puma LE can be operated manually or autonomously with AeroVironment’s common GCS.