Collaboration Aims to Integrate Unmanned Aircraft and Tactical Missile Systems with ACVs

WASHINGTON – AeroVironment Inc., a leader in unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and tactical missile systems (TMS), announced a new strategic relationship with General Dynamics Land Systems (GD), the leader in ground combat vehicles, to produce highly integrated and effective tactical UAS and TMS for armored ground combat vehicles, AeroVironment said in an Oct. 8 release.

"By integrating the leading small tactical UAS and loitering missile systems with the leading armored combat vehicles, our team will deliver a new level of battlefield lethality, survivability and combat effectiveness to protect and enable the warfighter," said Kirk Flittie, vice president and general manager of AeroVironment's UAS business. "This enhanced integration will ensure precise, mobile lethality with increased automation, decreased workload, and fewer operators required for small drone and loitering missile systems deployment. AeroVironment and General Dynamics Land Systems are ready today to equip our warfighters with more lethality tomorrow."

"The purpose of this partnership is to deliver a decisive advantage to ground combatants, to see first and strike first, across the tactical landscape," said Don Kotchman, U.S. vice president and general manager of General Dynamics Land Systems. "We're confident this integrated capability, expanding the warfighter's situational awareness, survivability and over-the-next-obstacle lethality, will define the market for years to come. This will be done without

adding significant burden to the Soldier or vehicle commander’s cognitive or physical workload. The benefits will be had in all environments, including urban, forest, desert or other terrain. This is the right partnership between industry leaders to offer real innovation to our customers.”

AeroVironment and GD’s collaborative projects will address the upcoming U.S. Army Next-Generation Combat Vehicle (NGCV) and U.S. Marine Corps Armored Reconnaissance Vehicle (ARV) programs. The NGCV program will dramatically benefit from automated drone scout and precision loitering missile engagement technology tightly coupled into the GD armored vehicle electronic architecture to rapidly geolocate and, if necessary, finish targets.

The ARV project has evolved well beyond a straightforward replacement for the Light Armored Vehicle into a networked family of manned vehicles, ground robots and drones, collectively capable of not only reconnaissance but also electronic warfare and long-range precision strikes. The vehicle is designed to launch a drone, scout deep, and then deploy precision fire and electronic warfare. It also will have an open architecture design that is upgraded with new technologies as they become available.