

GA-ASI'S MQ-9B SeaGuardian Showcased at RIMPAC 2024



Sonobuoy Dispensing System and LRASM Among the New Capabilities Featured

SAN DIEGO – 14 August 2024 – With the completion of the U.S. Navy's Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) flight operations on July 28, 2024, the MQ-9B SeaGuardian Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) supplied by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc., self-deployed back to its home base in El Mirage, Calif., but only after introducing an array of new capabilities. The flight home followed close to 100 flight hours supporting RIMPAC 2024 over the four-week exercise in and around the Hawaiian Islands.

RIMPAC is the world's largest international maritime exercise. RIMPAC 2024 featured 29 nations, 40 surface ships, three submarines, 14 national land forces, more than 150 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel.

SeaGuardian provided real-time Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) data feeds to the U.S. Pacific Fleet

Command Center using Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) parametrics and full-motion video to the watch floor and intelligence centers for real-time dynamic tasking – just as it did for the [RIMPAC 2022](#) exercise. This year, SeaGuardian delivered some new features and capabilities, including Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM) targeting and a new Sonobuoy Dispensing System (SDS) to support its Anti-Submarine Warfare capability. SeaGuardian was configured with a prototype SDS pod capable of deploying 10 A-size sonobuoys per pod (SeaGuardian can carry up to four SDS pods or up to 40 sonobuoys) and the SeaVue Multi-role radar from Raytheon, an RTX business. Upon dispensing, the sonobuoys were successfully monitored and controlled by the SeaGuardian's onboard Sonobuoy Monitoring and Control System (SMCS).

SeaGuardian is a maritime derivative of the MQ-9B SkyGuardian and remains the first UAS that offers multi-domain Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting (ISR&T) as an internal payload that can search the ocean's surface and depths in support of Fleet Operations. At RIMPAC 2024, SeaGuardian showcased all operational payloads, which includes the SeaVue, SNC's Electronic Support Measures (ESM) solution, an Automatic Identification System (AIS), and a self-contained Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) system.

SeaGuardian's multi-domain capabilities allow it to flex from mission to mission and pass real-time sensor data directly to the Fleet. For RIMPAC 2024, SeaGuardian added Link 16 Joint Range Extension Application Protocol (JREAP) "C" (internet protocol) and an integrated Minotaur Mission System to provide real-time sensor data for the various Maritime Operations Centers, ships, and aircraft with Minotaur nodes.

"For RIMPAC, the MQ-9B effectively passed ISR&T information to various surface and air units, such as the Nimitz-class carrier USS Carl Vinson, guided-missile destroyers (DDGs), littoral combat ships (LCS), frigates, patrol boats, P-8s, P-3s, and numerous other U.S. and foreign units that took part

in the exercise,” said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander.

On July 31, 2024, SeaGuardian self-deployed back to GA-ASI’s Desert Horizon Flight Operations Facility in El Mirage, Calif.