

# GA-ASI'S MQ-9B SeaGuardian Showcased in NAS Whidbey Island Open House



[Release From GA-ASI](#)

SAN DIEGO – Sept. 4, 2025 – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) deployed an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)-configured MQ-9B SeaGuardian® Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), Washington, to support its Open House event on August 23.

The naval air station's Open House showcased cutting-edge naval aviation capabilities as well as some vintage platforms from the past. At the request of NASWI leadership, GA-ASI provided its MQ-9B SeaGuardian to give public and military attendees an up-close look at a multi-mission Group 5 UAS, the largest and most capable type, and a glimpse into the future.

Whidbey Island has been a base for MQ-9B SeaGuardian's mission capabilities as part of several Navy exercises, including [Northern Edge](#) and [Integrated Battle Problem 2023](#), and

supported the aircraft carrier pre-deployment workups. However, during all of these events, the MQ-9B never landed at Whidbey Island. It was instead controlled and its data processed remotely from the naval air station while the aircraft flew in Hawaiian, Southern California, and Alaskan airspace. Crews fly GA-ASI's aircraft via satellite link, which means they can be sited anywhere, even thousands of miles away from where the aircraft is flying. The MQ-9B is visiting now for the Open House to let sailors and the public see the platform that will be operated remotely from Whidbey Island in an upcoming Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Operational Evaluation deployment to the Indo-Pacific Command's Area of Responsibility (AOR) in early 2026.

Utilizing its advanced onboard Detect and Avoid System, the MQ-9B was able to launch from its flight facility near Palmdale, California, and fly to Whidbey Island without the normal special handling required for UAS. Effectively, it was able to operate in the national airspace like any other piloted aircraft.

In addition to spotlighting the aircraft's ASW payloads, GA-ASI was able to demonstrate autonomous landing and takeoff capability and showcase onboard signals intelligence and maritime radar packages. The MQ-9B SeaGuardian was also configured with additional hardpoint pylons to showcase its external carriage capability, including multiple stations supporting various payloads and weapons.

"I'm pleased to support the Navy's continuing public engagement efforts with our MQ-9B and appreciate NAS Whidbey leadership's ongoing support of SeaGuardian operations. I look forward to continuing to work together as we demonstrate the capability of this multi-faceted UAS and fill critical capability gaps," said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander.

Leading this event was Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) AIRWorks, which plays a key role in

overseeing and supporting the development of the MQ-9B SeaGuardian. AIRWorks has partnered with GA-ASI in multiple ASW and Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting demonstrations, including the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise in July 2024. NAWCAD AIRWorks is also the Lead Systems Integrator and Program Manager for the Navy Operational Evaluation of MQ-9B in 2026.

With strong demand already in place from customers around the world, GA-ASI anticipates growing interest in the MQ-9B SeaGuardian given its record of delivering high-end maritime capabilities at a significantly lower cost than traditional manned maritime platforms.