

General Atomics Delivers First of Two Bearing Support Structures for Columbia-Class Subs

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems announced March 2 it has delivered to the U.S. Navy the first of two Bearing Support Structures for installation in the first Columbia-class ballistic-missile submarine currently under construction.

GA-EMS has been under contract with Naval Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division since 2019 to fabricate and deliver the support structures according to exacting Navy specifications and construction schedules.

“For a project involving the size and complexity of a BSS, we brought the technical strength of our manufacturing engineering, machining, welding and quality expertise together to successfully execute the deliverable on spec and on time,” stated Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. “We are extremely proud of our team as we continue to manufacture and deliver these critical structures to support the Navy’s Columbia-class submarine program.”

GA-EMS was awarded the second BSS delivery order in September 2021. Manufacturing activities have started at GA-EMS’ facilities in Tupelo, Mississippi. GA-EMS will deliver the second BSS at the end of 2023 to support the full construction start date of the Navy’s second Columbia-class submarine in fiscal 2024. The Navy intends to build 12 Columbia-class submarines over the next 20 years.

“The Navy has stated that the BSS is the largest nickel-copper weldment built to such exacting specifications ever created in

the U.S.," said Forney. "The BSS is indeed one of the most significant projects we've undertaken and demonstrates our extensive technical expertise and unique manufacturing capabilities to meet the needs of the Navy for a variety of complex components."