Navy’s Newest Carrier-Based Catapult, Trap Systems Steadily Advance Through Test

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – One year ago, the Navy’s newest aircraft launch and recovery systems successfully conducted historic first sorties aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford . Today, the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) and Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) progress through comprehensive test programs, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) said in a July 27 release.

“Data from shipboard testing indicates that both EMALS and AAG have demonstrated improved reliability projections over the solely land-based testing,” said Capt. Steve Tedford, former Aircraft Launch and Recovery Equipment (PMA 251) program manager.

Reliability is a key performance parameter for any new aircraft system, ensuring operational readiness for the fleet. EMALS and AAG are being put through the rigors to ensure they meet developmental milestones. Single-day shipboard operations show that both systems are capable of meeting operational requirements.

The EMALS and AAG teams, along with industry partner General Atomics, have developed numerous engineering changes to support the systems’ continued maturity and reliability growth, Tedford said.

Program management for both systems is multifaceted, and beyond the complex developmental engineering and test programs, the EMALS and AAG teams have remained focused on several critical support areas. In-depth logistics efforts have been underway to ensure adequate spares planning for the completion of the testing and full life cycle of these

critical systems; to create the maintenance requirement cards and tools Sailors will use to operate and maintain the new systems; and to provide those Sailors with interim and permanent training solutions.

To date, Sailors from CVN 78 have been trained on EMALS and AAG. Development of a curriculum and instruction of system-specific courses has been conducted by the General Atomics and Navy team.

“We are extremely pleased to see how well General Atomics’ EMALS and AAG operations and maintenance training program has served CVN 78 Sailors at both our Shipset Controls laboratory in San Diego and at NAVAIR’s land-based test sites,” said Scott Forney, president of General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems Group.

“The dedicated EMALS and AAG teams have excelled in overcoming numerous challenges and will continue charging ahead, completing these concurrent test programs, continually increasing confidence in these technologies and getting both systems mission ready,” said Tedford.