

US Navy awards launch and recovery system contract for fourth Ford-class aircraft carrier



An F/A-18F Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 213 launches off of the flight deck of the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) using the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System (EMALS), March 10, 2023. As the first-in-class ship of Ford-class aircraft carriers, CVN 78 represents a generational leap in the U.S. Navy's capacity to project power on a global scale.

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—The U.S. Navy awarded General Atomics a \$1.204-billion contract modification June 12 to build the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) and Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) for the future USS Doris Miller (CVN 81).

The contract includes AAG and EMALS production, shipset deliveries, engineering change orders, production incorporation of obsolescence mitigations, program support, installation, and certification support for CVN 81 through 2032.

Capt. Mike Kline, program manager for the Aircraft Launch and Recovery Equipment Program Office (PMA-251) said the contract award is an important evolution in the future of launch and recovery for U.S. Naval warfare.

“As the fourth Ford-class aircraft carrier to enter the fleet, CVN 81 can lean on CVN 78’s experience, and the lessons learned while advancing EMALS and AAG for the next generation of Sailors,” he said.

EMALS and AAG certification on USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) is currently underway, and system production on USS Enterprise (CVN 80) is near completion. Production work for EMALS and AAG on the CVN 81 will begin immediately, with support planned through 2032.