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# Successful first flight of the world's first Unmanned Airborne Early Warning solution

Saab and General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) have successfully completed the first flight of the world's first unmanned Airborne Early Warning (AEW) solution. This important achievement was made possible by integrating Saab's LoyalEye radar sensor with GA-ASI's unmanned MQ-9B aircraft. The partnership, announced in 2025, aims to enhance airborne early warning surveillance capabilities to support critical decision-making.

On 19 May, Saab's airborne early warning sensor, LoyalEye, successfully completed its first flight on an unmanned aircraft at GA-ASI's Desert Horizon facility in Southern California. This milestone marks the start of a several-month test evaluation phase, which will culminate in a full capability demonstration later this year.

Saab is a global leader in airborne early warning systems, known for its manned AEW&C solution, GlobalEye. GA-ASI brings advanced unmanned aircraft systems and extensive operational experience to the table. Together, the companies are developing an unmanned AEW solution designed to provide unmatched advanced air surveillance.

"LoyalEye on the MQ-9B offers critical airborne sensing, supporting extended persistence and operational reach. As a complement to manned assets, it aims to enhance situational awareness and, in combination, enable greater operational reach and flexibility", said Carl-Johan Bergholm, Head of Saab's business area Surveillance.

"AEW for MQ-9B will offer critical aloft sensing to defend against tactical air munitions, guided missiles, drones, fighter and bomber aircraft, and other threats," said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. "Operational availability for a medium-altitude, long-endurance UAS is the highest of any military aircraft, and as an unmanned platform, its aircrews are not put into harm's way."

The joint AEW offering from Saab and GA-ASI will support a wide range of applications, including early detection and warning, long-range detection and

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tracking, and the simultaneous tracking of multiple targets. The system will operate both beyond the line of sight and via satellite communication (SATCOM) connectivity.

*Saab is a leading defence and security company with an enduring mission, to help nations keep their people and society safe. Empowered by its 28,000 talented people, Saab constantly pushes the boundaries of technology to create a safer and more sustainable world. Saab designs, manufactures and maintains advanced systems in aeronautics, weapons, command and control, sensors and underwater systems. Saab is headquartered in Sweden. It has major operations all over the world and is part of the domestic defence capability of several nations.*

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