

GA-ASI and SAAB Will Demonstrate AEW&C on MQ-9B in 2026



Two Aerospace Leaders Are Bringing Airborne Early Warning and Control to UAS

From General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc.

DUBAI AIRSHOW – 17 November 2025 – Following [their announcement](#) to bring Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) capability to the world's leading Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) platform, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) and Saab will now team up to demonstrate the capability in the summer of 2026. The demo will be conducted at GA-ASI's Desert Horizon flight operations facility in Southern California using a GA-ASI MQ-9B equipped with AEW&C supplied by Saab.

In partnership with Saab, a leading company in AEW&C systems, GA-ASI is pairing Saab's AEW sensors with the world's longest-range, highest-endurance RPA, the MQ-9B. At sea or over land,

adding AEW capabilities on MQ-9B enables persistent air surveillance and enables AEW in areas of the world where it doesn't currently exist or is unaffordable, such as for navy aircraft carriers at sea.

"Adding AEW&C to the MQ-9B brings a critical new capability to our platform," said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. "We want to deliver a persistent AEW&C solution to our global operators that will protect them against sophisticated cruise missiles as well as simple but dangerous drone swarms."

MQ-9B models include the SkyGuardian® and SeaGuardian®, the United Kingdom's MQ-9B variant known as Protector, and the new MQ-9B STOL (Short Takeoff and Landing) configuration currently in development.

The AEW solution for MQ-9B will offer critical aloft sensing to defend against tactical air munitions, guided missiles, drones, fighter and bomber aircraft, and other threats. 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.

GA-ASI and Saab's AEW offering will span a wide range of applications, including early detection and warning; long-range detection and tracking; and simultaneous target tracking and flexible combat system integration – all over line-of-sight and SATCOM connectivity.