

GA-ASI and USAF Demonstrate APKWS on MQ-9A Reaper



Flight Test of Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System Using MQ-9A

From General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

SAN DIEGO – 11 May 2026 – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI), in collaboration with the U.S. Air Force (USAF), has conducted flight tests of an Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) using a USAF MQ-9A Reaper® Remotely Piloted Aircraft. MQ-9A is produced by GA-ASI.

The testing took place recently at the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR).

The demonstration featured multiple types and variations of shot profiles, including aerial targets. All shots were executed flawlessly by the MQ-9A crews using laser-guided rockets and a specialized launcher.

This effort supported real-time technological adaptation requirements, moving rapidly from planning to integration and flight test. It also brought together multiple Department of War stakeholders and their industry partners.

“We recognize the value that a system like APKWS brings to the MQ-9 aircraft as a tool to counter one-way attack drones,” said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. “APKWS can increase the number of weapons the MQ-9A is able to carry, as well being able to carry new lower cost weapons. More than anything, this integration effort underscores how government and industry can collaborate to rapidly test and make new capabilities available to warfighters.”