General Atomics Awarded Contract for Lithium Batteries for Manned Submersibles

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) has been awarded a contract from U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) to develop and deliver a prototype Lithium-ion Fault Tolerant (LiFT) battery system capable of powering the propulsion and support systems for manned undersea vehicles capable of transporting Special Operations Forces and payloads for a variety of missions, the company said in an Oct. 22 release.

USSOCOM undersea mobility platforms can be deployed from the shore and various host platforms. GA-EMS is under contract to deliver the LiFT battery systems for integration and testing.

“We continue to lead in the development of robust, flexible lithium-ion fault tolerant battery technologies to provide safe, reliable power and energy for a variety of manned and unmanned submersible platforms,” said Scott Forney, president at GA-EMS. “In addition to this new contract, we have delivered prototype LiFT battery systems for the DoD’s small, portable Semi-Autonomous Hydrographic Reconnaissance Vehicle and for SOCOM’s new dry undersea mobility platform.”

“We continue to work closely with our customers to demonstrate and successfully test LiFT battery systems to ensure they are approved for use aboard Navy vessels and will effectively support operations in the extreme environments our military forces often find themselves in,” said Rolf Ziesing, vice president of programs at GA-EMS.

The LiFT battery system’s modular design and single cell fault

tolerance is designed to prevent uncontrolled and catastrophic cascading lithium-ion cell failure, improving the safety of personnel and platforms while keeping power available for high mission assurance. The flexible architecture of the high energy density LiFT battery system can be configured to meet the most demanding needs of manned and unmanned underwater vehicles.

LiFT battery systems have undergone rigorous at-sea testing, including use in other undersea vehicles that have been classified by Det Norske Veritas Germanischer Lloyd, an international accredited registrar and classification society for the maritime industry, further demonstrating the safe operation of the LiFT battery system architecture.