General Atomics' EMALS and AAG Support Successful Ford Flight Deck Certification

An F/A-18F Super Hornet, attached to the "Gladiators" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106, lands on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) during flight operations, March 28, 2020. Ford is underway in the Atlantic Ocean conducting carrier qualifications. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Sawyer Connally

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) announced April 23 that successful USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Flight Deck Certification (FDC) has been completed with the support of the electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) and advanced arresting gear (AAG) system. The number of aircraft to have landed and taken off from CVN 78 now totals more than 2,000. CVN 78 used fleet squadrons from Carrier Air Wing Eight, as well as pilots from Strike Fighter Squadron 106 and Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 120 to obtain hundreds of sorties over a two-week period with all arrested landings and catapult launches completed safely.

"We continue to see EMALS and AAG perform according to specifications to execute cats and traps with the objective of reaching the robust evolution rates necessary for combat," stated Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. "We are working closely with the Navy and CVN 78 crew to ensure operational performance is achieved. We remain extremely proud of our team, the squadrons' pilots and the ship's crew for all their hard work and dedication and look forward to continuing success as CVN 78 undergoes these continued at sea periods."

FDC is a qualification of the ship's various aviation systems and includes the crews' qualification to operate the numerous systems. FDC was completed March 20 following day and night

launch and recovery exercises with F/A-18E/F Super Hornets. FDC is intended to qualify and prove ship and crew capabilities under operational conditions that can occur while on deployment.

On Jan. 31, CVN 78 completed aircraft compatibility testing, a significant milestone that exhibited EMALS and AAG's ability to launch and recover five types of aircraft in varying configurations – four of which for the first time. CVN 78 proved to accommodate the current naval air wing, including F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, C-2A Greyhound, EA-18G Growler and T-45C Goshawk aircraft.

GA-EMS is delivering EMALS and AAG for the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) and USS Enterprise (CVN 80).