SAIC Partners to Promote Loitering Munition, Underwater Comms System

The UVision Hero 400-EC loitering munition, which SAIC is helping develop to meet U.S. Navy requirements. *LISA NIPP*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – SAIC (Booth 801) is working with partners on weapons systems it says are of great interest to the U.S. Navy and other militaries: a loitering munition, such as those that have seen action in Ukraine, and an underwater communication system flexible enough to let divers control unmanned aircraft.

One is the Hero 400-EC long-endurance loitering munition system, originally developed by Israel's UVision. The canister-launched system could carry a variety of payloads, including munitions and has an endurance of up to two hours.

"We help them bring overseas technology that perhaps meets the requirements of DoD, and we take that technology, we Americanize it and then offer it up to DoD to meet their requirements," said Bob Carruthers, vice president of SAIC's Charleston Naval Business Unit in North Carolina.

UVision won a Marine Corps contract for a smaller version of the Hero. The Navy is developing requirements for a larger loitering munition for use on ships such as destroyers and cruisers, for which the 400 could contend, Carruthers said.

On the underwater side, SAIC is working with Mistral Inc. on the C-Master MKII and Orca, "a covert underwater communication system," said Peter J. Brown of SAIC's Industrial Manufacturing & Systems Engineering.

As many as 15 divers could share their locations and

communicate underwater using the system’s small antenna, and could even launch small unmanned aircraft and control drones or loitering munitions from underwater without the antenna having to break the surface.

“You can see 15 other divers on that screen, up to 3 kilometers away, underwater, using low intercept probability acoustic signatures, and at the same time you could potentially control a UAV, get the feed and control a terminal munition,” Carruthers said.

Brown said the system has been tested in prototype form with other navies and U.S. SEALs have had a look at it as well and provided feedback.