U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Unmanned Aircraft System MQ-9 Predator B

FACT SHEET

U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Air and Marine Operations (AMO) operates the highly capable and proven Predator B unmanned aircraft system (UAS) to further enhance operational capabilities and increase domain awareness. AMO selected the Predator B, manufactured by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, for its unique combination of operational capabilities, payload capacity, mission flexibility, potential to accommodate new sensor packages, and its safety and performance record with other federal agencies.

The UAS program focuses operations on the CBP priority mission of anti-terrorism by helping to identify and intercept potential terrorists and illegal cross-border activity.

AMO also deploys the UAS to aid in disaster relief and emergency response efforts of its Department of Homeland Security partners, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The remotely-piloted Predator B allows AMO personnel to safely conduct missions in areas that are difficult to access or otherwise too high-risk for manned aircraft or CBP ground personnel.

AMO first employed the Predator B to enhance law enforcement operations on the Southwest Border in 2005 and along the Northern Border in 2009. AMO has operated Predator Bs from Libby Army Airfield in Sierra Vista, Arizona, and along the Texas border since 2011.

AMO also operates a maritime variant UAS called the Guardian. AMO's Guardian aircraft fly from Naval Air Station Corpus Christi in Texas and along the Northern Region. The Guardian can be operated from any designated UAS location to conduct missions within the maritime border areas. AMO expects to employ the Predator B throughout the border regions with command and control from a network of ground control stations across the country. The Predator B's capability to provide high-quality streaming video to first responders, and to assess critical infrastructure before and after events, makes it an ideal aircraft to aid in emergency preparations and recovery operations.

The UAS has provided emergency support for multiple hurricanes and floods since 2008. Video recorders document suspect activities for evidentiary use.

Performance and Weight:

- **Maximum Speed**
  240 knots (276 mph)
- **Service Ceiling Altitude**
  50,000 feet
- **Endurance**
  Up to 20 hours
- **Maximum Gross Weight**
  10,500 pounds

Other System Components

- Fixed and mobile ground control stations
- Electro-optical/infrared sensors, which allow for crewmembers to maintain awareness of targets in all environments
- Surface search radar/ground moving target indicator

For more information, visit the CBP.gov website
or contact the Office of Public Affairs at (202) 344-1780.

10/08/2015