

Leonardo's drink-can-sized decoy launched from GA-ASI MQ-9

- **The two companies are working together to make Leonardo's BriteCloud 218 decoy available as an off-the-shelf protection option for MQ-9 operators**
- **BriteCloud is the first product in the world to offer the latest Digital Radio Frequency Memory (DRFM) jamming technology in an expendable package which fits in standard countermeasure dispensers**
- **Following its successful testing and entry into service with the UK's Royal Air Force, the unique BriteCloud capability is now being evaluated for use by US Armed Forces**

Rome, 22nd February 2021 – Leonardo and General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) are working together to bring the world-class protection offered by Leonardo's BriteCloud expendable active decoy to operators of the MQ-9 remotely-piloted aircraft system (RPAS). The joint activity is addressing the growing market need to protect the high-value unmanned aircraft from modern, radar-guided threats as they carry out their missions.

Progress has already been made, with a number of BriteCloud rounds successfully launched from an MQ-9 in an aircraft survivability 'carriage and release' trial, designed to ensure that the decoy can be dispensed safely from the platform's new Self-Protect Pod. Discussions are underway concerning further tests with live rounds to demonstrate that BriteCloud can effectively protect the MQ-9 against the most advanced radio frequency (RF) threats.

BriteCloud is a next-generation decoy, protecting aircraft from the latest radar-guided threats. The world's first, and currently only, such product proven to work effectively, BriteCloud packs sophisticated jamming technology into a package the size of a drinks can, allowing it to be fired from an aircraft in the same manner as a flare. Designed and manufactured in the UK, it was first adopted for service by the Royal Air Force following an extensive testing campaign. As a unique capability, it is now being evaluated by the US Armed Forces under the US Foreign Comparative Test (FCT) programme.

BriteCloud is available in different variants for a range of aircraft types. BriteCloud 218 (2x1x8 in ch 'brick' round) is the version compatible with the MQ-9's dispensing system and is also suitable for US-manufactured combat jets such as the F-15 and F-16. Meanwhile, the BriteCloud 55 variant is suitable for 55mm round-format dispensers on aircraft such as the Eurofighter Typhoon, Saab Gripen E and Tomado GR4. A third variant, 55-T, is currently under development for transport aircraft and helicopters.

BriteCloud employs Digital Radio Frequency Memory (DRFM) jamming technology, considered the 'gold standard' of protection against radar-guided surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles. This technology allows the BriteCloud round to sense and process incoming radar signals and, in response, develop and transmit a highly-convincing electronic 'ghost' signal, fooling threat radars into following the decoy rather than the aircraft.

Leonardo, a global high-technology company, is among the top ten world players in Aerospace, Defence and Security and Italy's main industrial company. Organized into five business divisions, Leonardo has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the USA, where it also operates through subsidiaries such as Leonardo DRS (defense electronics), and joint ventures and partnerships: ATR, MBDA, Telespazio, Thales Alenia Space and Avio. Leonardo competes in the most important international markets by leveraging its areas of technological and product leadership (Helicopters, Aircraft, Aerostructures, Electronics, Cyber Security and Space). Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2019 Leonardo recorded consolidated revenues of €13.8 billion and invested €1.5 billion in Research and Development. The Group has been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) since 2010 and is named as sustainability global leader in the Aerospace & Defence sector for the second year in a row of DJSI in 2020.