

XQ-58 Valkyrie Demonstrates EA Capabilities for US Marine Corps

By Richard Scott

A Kratos Unmanned Systems Division XQ-58A Valkyrie uncrewed air vehicle (UAV) has successfully demonstrated the ability to operate with F-35 Lightning II aircraft and deliver an integrated electronic attack (EA) capability during a live test event sponsored by the US Marine Corps.

The demonstration, which marked the culmination of Phase 1 of the Marine Corps' Penetrating Affordable Autonomous Collaborative Killer – Portfolio (PAACK-P) program, was conducted at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Flight test support was provided by the 40th Flight Test Squadron, 96th Test Wing.

Able to operate independently, as part of a swarm, or as a collaborative "Loyal Wingman," the XQ-58A Valkyrie is a high-performance, runway-independent tactical UAV capable of long-range flights at high-subsonic speeds. The Valkyrie air vehicle has been designed so as to be able to carry a range of weapons and other payloads internally and/or on wing stations.

According to Kratos, the PAACK-P flight test proved the ability of the XQ-58A to fly in concert with two F-35 aircraft and demonstrated the ability to deliver an integrated EA capability using a Northrop Grumman payload. "The XQ-58A's advanced EA payload autonomously detected, identified and geolocated multiple tactically relevant targets of interest, transmitted emitter target track coordinates to collaborative assets, and successfully presented non-kinetic electronic attack effects against multiple emitters," said the company. It added that "all flight test objectives were successfully

met.”

The flight test demonstration follows on from the December 2023 award of a \$22.9 million Phase 2 contract modification to Kratos covering additional PAACK-P engineering development and flight test demonstrations. PAACK-P is being used to inform MQ-58B requirements for the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Unmanned Aerial System Expeditionary Tactical Aircraft for use in a suppression of enemy air defense role. The program is being supported by the Headquarters Marine Corps Aviation Cunningham Group and Advanced Development Team, Marine Corps Warfighting Lab, the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Naval Air Systems Command, and the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division’s AIRWorks organization.