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Savannah River National Laboratory UAS Team Receives National Recognition Second Consecutive Year Team Wins Department of Energy Award

Aiken, S.C. (March 3, 2022) – Savannah River National Laboratory’s (SRNL) Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) team is the recipient of the 2021 Department of Energy (DOE) UAS Unit Award, an award given by the DOE’s Office of Aviation Management.

This is the second consecutive year that the SRNL Team has won the award, which is based upon the following criteria: management, operations, maintenance, training, safety, and best practices. Nominations of UAS teams were reviewed and judged by an external, independent panel consisting of subject-matter experts from the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Defense and civil aviation.

“The SRNL UAS Team continues to exceed expectations,” said SRNL Associate Lab Director for Global Security Tammy Taylor. “In the coming year we intend to further grow and develop the UAS program, our relationships and collaborative missions.”

The SRNL UAS team consists of a program manager, operations manager, an aviation safety officer, six FAA Part 107 certified pilots, and a trusted operator program level 2 remote pilot. Another individual serves as ground control support and as a visual observer. The SRNL UAS Program currently has 20 UAS aircraft (rotary and fixed-wing) in its fleet and the team works closely with the DOE-Savannah River Site aviation manager and safety officer to plan and conduct on-site missions under an approved flight readiness review board.

In 2021, SRNL logged over 100 flight hours and more than 350 flights. Missions included exercises with the U.S. Marines and Air Force, infrastructure inspections, aerial photography and videography, emergency response exercise support, training and currency, research and development activities, and other U.S. government support.

Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) is a United States Department of Energy multi-program research and development center that puts science to work to protect the nation by providing practical, cost-effective solutions to the nation’s environmental, nuclear security, nuclear materials management, and energy manufacturing challenges (<https://srnl.doe.gov/>).

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Figure 1: One of the 20 UAS aircraft (rotary and fixed wing) in the SRNL UAS fleet.

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