

New pilotless plane headed for Afghanistan

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Army soon will deploy a faster and more lethal pilotless plane to Afghanistan and then to Iraq, it was reported Tuesday. The Reaper flies three times as fast and can carry eight times more weapons than the Predator, the pilotless U.S. plane in use since 2001, USA Today reported. The Reaper, with its longer range and speed, is well suited to roust Taliban fighters from Afghanistan's vast and mountainous terrain, said Brig. Gen. James Poss, director of intelligence for Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base, Va. Deploying to Afghanistan this fall, the Reaper squadron will start with four planes and ultimately grow to 20 planes, USA Today said. The Reaper is expected to be in more demand than the Predators, which this year logged more than 70,000 flight hours, more than triple the total in 2003, USA Today reported.

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