

Global monthly magazine for Drones



# DRONES WORLD

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CO-FOUNDER AND CEO - WINGCOPTER

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**B. KARTIKEYA**

Hello Readers,

**A**pril marks another exciting chapter in the ever-evolving story of drones—a story that continues to break boundaries in technology, regulation, and imagination. As we step deeper into 2025, we are witnessing drones expand their reach not only across industries but into the very fabric of daily life.

From autonomous delivery networks to precision agriculture, search-and-rescue missions to cinematic storytelling, the drone ecosystem is more vibrant and impactful than ever before. This month, we explore how AI integration, real-time data streaming, and enhanced battery technology are transforming drones from useful tools into essential partners across sectors.

But with innovation comes responsibility. As regulatory frameworks race to keep pace, 2025 has already seen meaningful conversations emerge around privacy, airspace management, and sustainability. In this edition, we speak to industry leaders and policy makers working to ensure that drone technology grows in ways that are ethical, safe, and accessible.

We also spotlight the global drone community—the pilots, engineers, entrepreneurs, and enthusiasts pushing the limits of what UAVs can achieve. From youth drone programs in rural schools to groundbreaking international competitions, the next generation is already shaping the future of flight.

Drones world contributing editor Ms. Mary Jo Wagner has interacted with Mr. Ansgar Kadura, the co-founder and CEO of German drone manufacturer (and operator) Wingcopter. They were at GeoWeek to reintroduce themselves to the surveying sector after pivoting from drone delivery services to long-range surveying.

At Drones World Magazine, we remain committed to covering not just where drones are going, but how they're getting there—and who's taking them. Whether you're an industry veteran, a hobbyist, or simply drone-curious, this issue offers a high-flying mix of insights, trends, and inspiration.

So buckle in, take off, and join us in exploring the frontiers of drone innovation. The sky is no longer the limit—it's just the beginning.

*Kartikeya B.*

## Evolito to Supply Electric Propulsion Motors for Flying Whales' Innovative Airships



**E**volito proudly announces its collaboration with Flying Whales, a pioneering company in the development of large capacity airships. This partnership marks a significant milestone in sustainable cargo aviation, demonstrating both innovative solutions to real world problems and reducing carbon footprints.

Evolito will provide their state-of-the-art D250 electric propulsion motor for the LCA60T airship, which is due to make its debut test flight in 2027. The LCA60T is 200 meters long and has been designed to transport exceptionally heavy loads of up to 60 tonnes. Flying Whales' airships are designed to provide a unique solution for transporting heavy and oversized cargo, especially in regions with limited infrastructure.

By utilizing Evolito's advanced motors, Flying Whales aims to create a more efficient and environmentally sustainable mode of transport, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and promoting greener logistics practices worldwide.

Flying Whales selected Evolito's D250 electric motor for its airship because of its exceptional power and torque density. Each airship will be powered by 32 D250 motors. Another critical factor for Flying Whales in their choice of electric motor partner was Evolito's ability to scale production to deliver the quantity of electric motors required to meet Flying Whales' production forecast.

Evolito's electric motors are the smallest and lightest in their class. The D250 offers industry leading power density of 18.5kW/kg providing 240kW peak power and weighing 13kg.

In 2023 Evolito was awarded Design Organisation Approval by the UK's Civil Aviation Authority and is working towards POA and ISO9001 later this year which will help to reduce certification costs for Flying Whales.

Vincent Guibout, CEO of Flying Whales said "When designing an airship, weight is critical. In the three years we have been working together, Evolito has demonstrated the ability to deliver best in class power density from its unique axial flux electric motors along with the ability to ramp production to meet our forecast requirements. There is an excellent synergy between our teams - we share the same passion for enabling electric flight through engineering excellence and innovation - and I look forward to working with Evolito towards the first LCA60T flight and beyond into production and commercial operation."

Dr. Chris Harris, Evolito CEO and co-founder said "Flying Whales' LCA60T airship is a truly inspirational aircraft, demonstrating that electric flight can help solve global challenges - from reducing harmful emissions to delivering critical infrastructure sustainably. Evolito's unique axial-flux technology enables a new class of lightweight, compact and high-performance electric motor, opening up many new aircraft designs, mission profiles and use-cases -setting new standards in electric propulsion for Aerospace."

## CUCUYO AND CAVOK UAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED FIRST FLIGHT TESTS

**Cucuyo**

**Cavok**  
UAS

**C**ucuyo and Cavok UAS announced that they have successfully completed the first flight tests of Cucuyo's P-100 airborne laser communication terminal installed on Cavok UAS drones. A total of twelve tests were conducted in Spain to validate the integration of key systems and pave the way for future product development advances.

The flight tests followed in-depth physical and mechanical integration phases and simulated conditions that closely reflect real-world operational scenarios. The tests with Cucuyo's P-100 laser communication terminal were carried out in collaboration with Cavok UAS France, skilled engineers from Cavok Spain and experienced test pilots. Spain was chosen as the test location because it provides an ideal environment for evaluating performance.

The flight tests exceeded expectations, and all predefined objectives were achieved. The results will serve as basis for the next phase of technical development of the laser communication terminal. This includes incorporating a new version of the terminal for further tests, with the focus on the robustness of data link itself.

"We are thrilled with the outcomes of these flight tests. They not only validate the robustness of the integration process but also set the stage for the next critical milestones in our innovation journey. We look forward to the upcoming tests with the updated Cucuyo P-100 terminal, which will bring us one step closer to creating a fully operational solution", says Fabrice Parodi, CEO Cavok UAS.

"The results of these flight tests, which we obtained thanks to our partner Cavok UAS, are invaluable for the validation of our product. The data has already been evaluated by our specialists and will enable us to optimize the operational concepts and our P-100's link stabilization system.", adds Dr. Markus Knappek, CTO & Managing Director Cucuyo.

## THALES AND BHARAT DYNAMICS LTD AGREE ON INITIAL SUPPLY OF MAN-PORTABLE AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS TO INDIA

Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) are proud to announce the signing of an initial supply of Laser Beam Riding Man Portable Air Defence systems (LBRM) in response to a requirement set out by the Indian Government to support India's air defence capabilities.

This initial supply of High Velocity Missiles (STARStreak) and launchers will be delivered this year and represents the first time that India has received this latest VSHORAD capability. This step confirms the foundation of a long-term collaboration and manufacturing partnership between Thales and BDL. In the spirit of the 'Make in India' initiative, this partnership will serve the current and future requirements of the Indian Ministry of Defence.

Thales, together with BDL, is committed to the transfer of technology (ToT) of battle proven capabilities to India to equip the Indian Armed Forces.

This contract represents the first major agreement since the establishment of the United Kingdom's Defence Partnership-India, a bespoke programme office breaking down barriers to trade and offering government-to-government contracting, where appropriate, further solidifying the defence and security relationship between the two nations. This contract also reflects Thales' long-term partnership of 70+ years with India, serving as a testimony to its continued growth.

A production partnership with India will also



increase UK production at the Thales Belfast site, where LBRM is designed.

Lord Vernon Coaker, Minister of State for Defence, said: "This exciting collaboration is just one of the ways that we are growing our defence relationship and partnership with India. While supporting India's air defence capability and global security, this agreement also demonstrates defence as an engine for growth and

delivers on the government's Plan for Change."

"This is a momentous occasion for all the stakeholders involved in the development of LBRM Air Defence solutions. It signifies the beginning of an exciting chapter in our collaboration with BDL, contributing to the Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision. The UK-India strategic partnership finds renewed strength through this contract, which is poised to make a significant impact in the domain of air defence in India," declared Pascale Sourisse, President & CEO, Thales International.

"We are pleased to take our collaboration with Thales to this next significant step, enhancing our contribution to the defence ecosystem and our ability to support existing and future LBRM Air Defence customers. This initiative aligns perfectly with our Government's 'Make in India,' 'ease of doing business,' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' programmes, giving a major boost to the local industry through partnerships with global organisations like Thales," said Cmde A Madhavarao (retd.), Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Dynamics Limited.

"The signing of this contract with BDL and Thales to support India's air defence capability is a huge stride forward in strengthening our partnership with India. I am proud to see that Thales' expertise in the domain of Air defence will bring vital, battle proven capabilities to India," said Phil Siveter, CEO of Thales in the UK.

## DUFOUR AEROSPACE ENTERS STRATEGIC TEAMING AGREEMENT WITH VOLATUS AEROSPACE TO ADVANCE AERIAL CARGO, SURVEILLANCE, INSPECTION, AND MAPPING MISSIONS

Dufour Aerospace, the pioneering Swiss drone manufacturer, has signed a strategic teaming agreement with Volatus Aerospace Inc. (TSXV: FLT), a global leader in aerial solutions. This partnership paves the way for the worldwide deployment of Dufour's Aero2 drone—bringing smarter, more efficient aerial logistics, mapping, and surveillance solutions to industries and communities that need them most.

"This collaboration with Volatus Aerospace represents a pivotal step in advancing the deployment of our Aero2 platform," said Sascha Hardegger, CEO of Dufour Aerospace. "Volatus' extensive global reach and operational expertise make them the perfect partner to expand the availability of our VTOL technology in challenging and underserved areas, such as remote communities in Canada and Africa. Together, we aim to deliver efficient, sustainable, and mission-critical solutions that redefine possibilities in advanced aerial



logistics."

This announcement comes right on the heels of an exciting milestone for Dufour: the successful first flight of the Aero2 drone with an in-house-developed hybrid-electric engine. This flight demonstrated the Aero2's ability to seamlessly transition from vertical takeoff to forward flight—an important proof of concept that will support the commercial and operational capabilities Volatus will help expand.

"Dufour's Aero2 represents a leap forward in drone technology," stated Glen Lynch, CEO of Volatus Aerospace. "Having witnessed its capabilities firsthand and meeting the exceptional team behind its development, I am confident that this partnership will significantly enhance our fleet and operational capabilities. With the Aero2, we can expand our service offering and accelerate the commercialization of our Operations Control Center and remote operations."

## DroneShield Joins AUKUS Export Framework, Unlocking New Defense Trade Opportunities



**D**roneShield, a global leader in counterdrone defense technology has officially been registered with both the United States and Australian governments under AUKUS, enabling the export of most military and dual-use goods, technologies, and services to the United States and the United Kingdom without the need for an export license.

This development marks a significant milestone in enhancing defense trade and cooperation between AUKUS partners. By eliminating licensing requirements for qualifying products and technologies, the agreement streamlines trade, reduces administrative barriers, and accelerates the delivery of critical capabilities to allied defense forces.

The AUKUS trilateral export agreement, which took effect on September 1, 2024, represents a generational shift in defense industry collaboration. By creating a seamless trade environment between Australia, the U.S., and the UK, this initiative strengthens industrial partnerships, enhances interoperability, and supports rapid deployment of cutting-edge defense technologies.

With registration now in place, DroneShield is positioned to leverage the full benefits of this agreement. The removal of export licensing requirements provides a competitive advantage by reducing lead times, simplifying regulatory processes, and expanding opportunities to engage with defense and security partners across the AUKUS nations. This streamlined approach allows for more efficient collaboration on joint projects, research initiatives, and advanced technological developments.

"Being officially registered under AUKUS strengthens our ability to contribute to global defense initiatives by enabling a more rapid and efficient delivery of advanced capabilities," remarked Oleg Vornik, Chief Executive Officer of DroneShield.

"The simplified export process enhances collaboration, fosters innovation, and reinforces the shared security objectives of Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom."

The Australian government has committed \$28 million in the 2024-25 budget to support industry engagement and implementation of the new framework. This investment reflects the commitment of AUKUS nations to fostering deeper defense collaboration and ensuring that key capabilities are delivered swiftly and effectively.

As a leading provider in advanced counterdrone technology, DroneShield is well-positioned to capitalize on this agreement, strengthening its role in delivering defense solutions and driving technological advancements across the industry.

## Wingcopter Extends Range of Applications to Long-range LiDAR Surveying



**W**ingcopter, a leading German drone manufacturer, seller and service provider, has announced that it will expand its offering beyond cargo drones to include the sale of long-range BVLOS LiDAR surveying solutions. For this, the Wingcopter 198, the company's flagship product, will be equipped with superior laser scanning and camera systems, enabling the efficient and rapid collection of high-quality data. The aim is to give customers the opportunity to survey up to 37 miles (60 km) of linear infrastructure in one mission, carrying a 10 lbs (4.5 kg) sensor system. Potential use cases include the inspection of power lines, pipelines, railways and roads, as well as the mapping of terrain and vegetation that is difficult to access.

The announcement was made at GEO WEEK in Denver, Colorado, a leading trade show for geospatial technology, where Wingcopter is currently showcasing its new application. The planned system allows to collect up to 570 pts/m<sup>2</sup> with a sensor accuracy of 10 mm and a precision of 5 mm, significantly outperforming existing solutions in the market. Using a Wingcopter with a high-end LiDAR, customers can scan up to 2,560 acres (10.3 square kilometers) in a single 42-minute BVLOS mission.

Ansgar Kadura, Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer at Wingcopter, points out: "After years of developing and relentless testing, we have frozen the Wingcopter 198 in the configuration that is currently undergoing FAA type certification in the United States. The drone has unique payload and range characteristics, and with a proven product lifetime of more than 1,000 flight hours, it is one of the most reliable long-range eVTOL UAS on the market. Based on this configuration, we are developing a solution to address the field of high-quality LiDAR surveying and integrating the best commercially available sensor systems. I look forward to discussing with surveyors and learning about their vision for an ideal BVLOS LiDAR surveying drone." Strong interest comes from Brazil, where Synerjet, Wingcopter's authorized local partner, plans to deploy fleets of Wingcopter 198 drones in the surveying market.

Augustinho Simoes, Synerjet's Director of Drone Operations and Development, comments: "Together with Wingcopter, we are developing custom applications, adding more functionality to the aircraft and meeting requirements from other industries, such as asset inspections, vegetation monitoring and mapping. The first version will be equipped with a high-end LiDAR sensor that offers a wide 100-degree field of view and an extremely high pulse repetition rate of up to 24 MHz. The measuring beam is emitted consecutively in three different directions: it alternates from strictly nadir to +10 degrees forward, and to -10 degrees backward. This allows data acquisition with unparalleled completeness in data capture, especially in challenging environments with vertical surfaces, narrow canyons, transmission lines, railways, highways, forest plantations and many other applications."

## SKYPORTS ENTERS SAUDI ARABIA WITH PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FOR GIGA-PROJECTS



Skyports Drone Services (Skyports) is making its first entry into the Saudi Arabian market through a strategic collaboration with iot squared, a joint venture between Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF) and national telecom company stc group. The partnership will leverage Skyports' expertise in beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations for a proof-of-concept exploring the integration of drone technology into Saudi Arabia's large-scale infrastructure and real estate developments, known as giga-projects. In addition, Skyports will help establish a BVLOS-friendly ecosystem to accelerate the expansion of drone operations across the country. This includes developing iot squared's remote command and control centre.

The proof-of-concept will demonstrate how drone services can contribute to more sustainable transport solutions while enabling faster, more efficient operations. By showcasing real-world applications, the initiative aims to set the foundation for widespread adoption of drone technology across Saudi Arabia's giga-projects.

Skyports has a strong track record of successful drone service implementations across multiple industries, including medical, maritime, energy and infrastructure. The company has previously partnered with major organisations such as Royal Mail, Equinor and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. This experience positions Skyports as a key enabler in advancing Saudi Arabia's smart infrastructure and mobility solutions through the implementation of on demand, highly automated cargo deliveries.

As the project progresses, Skyports and iot squared will explore further opportunities to scale drone operations across Saudi Arabia's ongoing and upcoming giga-projects.

Daniel O'Neill, General Manager, Middle East, at Skyports said, "With its strong focus on innovative infrastructure and mobility, Saudi Arabia has long been a key target market for us. The efforts of the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) and the Ministry of Transport and Logistics Services, have fostered a progressive regulatory environment that has been instrumental in unlocking the drone operations for the country. We're excited to work alongside iot squared and bring our expertise in inter-island drone delivery to Saudi Arabia, demonstrating how drone technology can enhance efficiency and connectivity for world-renowned giga-projects."

Othman Aldahash, iot squared CEO, said: Our partnership with Skyports reinforces iot squared's position as a key player in IoT and drone-enabled solutions. By focusing on complex operations in remote and offshore locations, we're addressing critical missions that demand high precision and where traditional methods are often expensive or inefficient. Together, we aim to deliver impactful, cost-effective alternatives that redefine operational excellence in key sectors."

## DRONE COMPANY ADLC RAISES €2.08 MILLION FOR GLOBAL EXPANSION



Drone logistics company ADLC has raised €2.08 million in seed funding to accelerate its growth and expand its services in the maritime and offshore industry, with Port of Antwerp-Bruges among its investors.

The investment round was led by Galactic Beacon Ventures (GBV) and LRM, with NXT II also joining.

The funding will be used to support the development of ADLC's business to leverage drone technologies to offer last-mile delivery in maritime and offshore environments, as it looks to offer drone logistics services in key ports and offshore energy sites worldwide.

The company has already been offering drone delivery services at the Port of Antwerp for a number of years, where it is collaborating with testing and certification firm SGS and serving clients like BASF.

"Since 2018, Port of Antwerp-Bruges has been working on an ambitious roadmap to enable drone flights across the vast port area, in support of multiple use cases," said Erwin Verstraelen, Vice President Innovation at Port of Antwerp-Bruges.

"This has resulted in a vibrant ecosystem with over 1,500 authorised drone flights in 2024, the majority being Beyond visual line of sight flights (BVLOS), an indication of maturity."

"ADLC has opened a new chapter with a first use case for cargo, a vast area of opportunities. Given the strategic nature of this evolution for the port ecosystem at large, Port of Antwerp-Bruges has committed itself to support the further development via a strategic investment."



## INDIAN INDIGENOUS DRONE COMPANY AKSI AEROSPACE GROUP SECURES ₹85 CRORE MANUFACTURING ORDER FROM FIXAR GLOBAL

**A**KSI Aerospace Group and FIXAR Global have entered into a strategic agreement for licensed drone manufacturing in India, valued at up to ₹85 crore (\$10 million). This collaboration marks a significant milestone in India's drone industry, reinforcing the country's self-reliance in drone manufacturing and strengthening its position as a global hub for drone production.

As part of this agreement, AKSI Aerospace Group will manufacture drones in India for both domestic and global markets, leveraging its expertise in end-to-end indigenous development of drone subsystems—such as navigation systems, propulsion, batteries, airframe composites, and imaging systems. By manufacturing these critical components in-house, AKSI is reducing India's dependence on foreign imports, while ensuring trust-worthy, secure and high-quality drone production.

FIXAR Global is a leading software and aircraft design developer, powering commercial autonomous drones for industrial applications. FIXAR has a global footprint spanning North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, offering world-class drone solutions through an extensive network of distribution partners.

By collaborating with AKSI Aerospace Group, FIXAR aims to scale its manufacturing operations in India for global markets, leveraging AKSI's state-of-the-art production, quality control, training, and maintenance capabilities. This move aligns with FIXAR's vision of expanding its advanced drone technology into high-growth markets while reinforcing India's position in global drone manufacturing.

Vasily Fainveits Lukashov, Founder and CEO, FIXAR Global, commented on the partnership: "We are thrilled to partner with AKSI Aerospace Group and support the expansion of India's Indigenous drone manufacturing ecosystem. As drones become essential across industries, the need for reliable, locally manufactured UAVs has never been greater. At FIXAR Global, we are committed to bringing our technologies to the Indian market with the vision of being the 'Apple' of the drone industry. In this journey, AKSI Aerospace Group is set to become akin to our 'Foxconn,' enabling us to scale production and drive the growth of indigenous drone manufacturing in



India for export."

"We are not only focusing on the Indian market but also adopting a global strategy where FIXAR leads as a strong research and development partner, and AKSI becomes a centre for excellence in production, quality control, training, and maintenance for Asia and other markets. Our \$10 million collaboration with AKSI reflects our confidence in their engineering expertise and commitment to end-to-end indigenous development. This partnership aligns with our vision of working with manufacturers who prioritize innovation, security, and self-reliance in drone technology."

Pankaj Akula, Group MD, AKSI Aerospace Group, highlighted the significance of the collaboration: "At AKSI Aerospace Group, our mission is to make India self-reliant in drone manufacturing by developing critical drone subsystems in-house, including navigation systems, batteries, propulsion, composites,

and cameras. Each of our group companies is dedicated to the indigenous design, development, and production of these key components, reducing reliance on foreign imports and creating a holistic indigenous drone ecosystem."

"FIXAR Global's trust in our capabilities is a testament to India's transition from 'Make in India' to 'Made in India' in the drone sector. By focusing on domestic manufacturing, we are not just building drones—we are contributing to India's growth in aerospace innovation and strengthening its position in the global drone industry."

This partnership between AKSI Aerospace Group and FIXAR Global is expected to accelerate India's leadership in drone manufacturing, reduce dependency on foreign components, and enhance the country's role in the global drone supply chain.

## PEGASUS AERO GROUP OBTAINS AUTHORIZATION FOR DRONE OPERATIONS BEYOND THE PILOT'S VISUAL LINE OF SIGHT



The Spanish National Aviation Safety Agency (AESAs) has granted Pegasus Aero Group the first specific BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) authorization, which in this case is being obtained to operate in the Fuerteventura Technology Park and to fly a fixed-wing unmanned vertical takeoff platform with a wingspan of more than three meters within the framework of the ISSEC Project.

This project is an ambitious research, development, and innovation (R&D&I) initiative focused on creating innovative solutions for emergencies, security, biodiversity, and other public and private services in the Canary Islands. With this authorization, which also allows for flights beyond visual line of sight, Pegasus Aero Group positions itself at the forefront of the sector, exploring new technological frontiers that not only improve efficiency and safety in critical operations, but also commit to nature protection, environmental sustainability, and emergency management by offering intelligent data management solutions.

The project, called the Solutions, Emergencies, and Biodiversity Development Center (ISSEC), has been co-financed by the Government of the Canary Islands, the Fuerteventura Island Council, and the Ministry of Science and Innovation, underscoring the importance of collaboration between institutions to drive technological development in the region.

## Volatus Aerospace Partners with RigiTech to Enhance Medical Delivery Services with Long-Range Drone Technology



Volatus Aerospace Inc. a leading provider of aerial solutions, is excited to announce a new strategic partnership with RigiTech, a Swiss-based drone technology company. This collaboration aims to integrate RigiTech's Eiger long-range delivery drone into Volatus' expanding drone delivery network, significantly enhancing its medical delivery capabilities across Canada and beyond.

The Eiger drone is known for its robust, tested design capable of carrying 3 kg payloads for up to 100 km. Equipped with advanced avionics and a safety recovery parachute, the Eiger is ideally suited for the longer-range delivery requirements of Volatus' medical delivery services.

"Integrating RigiTech's Eiger drone into our operations enables us to extend our delivery distances opening up additional avenues for medical and rural delivery," said Glen Lynch, CEO of Volatus Aerospace. "The Eiger's long-range delivery capacity and reliability perfectly complement our existing local delivery RPAS, the Canary, enabling us to meet the growing demand for timely and critical medical deliveries over extended distances. RigiTech is a great addition to our partner ecosystem." Volatus currently operates two remotely operated drone delivery services—one in the Greater Toronto region and another in Edmonton, Alberta—with all flights managed remotely from its Operations Control Center in Vaughan. The addition of the Eiger drone will allow Volatus to broaden its service offering, adding range and catering to more remote and underserved locations across Canada and other developing markets. "This collaboration with Volatus represents a significant step forward in our mission to transform logistics through drone technology," said Adam Klapotcz, CEO of RigiTech. "Volatus' extensive remote operating experience and sophisticated Operations Control Center provide the ideal infrastructure to showcase the Eiger's capabilities on a large scale."

## AutoSpray Systems Achieves CAA Approval for BVLOS Drone Operations in Agriculture

AutoSpray Systems is delighted to confirm that on 11th March 2025, it was granted Operational Authorisation by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to conduct Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations in an Atypical Air Environment (AAE).

This approval marks a significant advancement in drone technology for agriculture, opening up new commercial opportunities across multiple sectors.

With this certification, AutoSpray Systems is now authorised to operate its 120kg agricultural drone for spraying liquids and dispersing granules in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and beyond. Previously, drone operations were restricted to a 500-metre radius from the remote pilot, but with this new BVLOS AAE approval, the company can now fly without distance limitations, subject to appropriate risk assessments for each location.

### Sectors Set to Benefit from BVLOS Operations

The newly granted approval enables AutoSpray Systems to contribute to a range of environmental and agricultural projects, including:

Peatland Restoration - Facilitating large-scale reseedling and the rehabilitation of degraded peatlands.

Paludiculture Crop Seeding - Advancing the cultivation of wetland-adapted crops to support biodiversity and carbon sequestration, in collaboration with DEFRA and the SEAD Artists consortium.

Reforestation Projects - Deploying drones for tree seeding and afforestation in areas where traditional methods are challenging or inaccessible.

Andy Sproson, Director of AutoSpray Systems, commented: "Historically, our low-level drone operations were restricted by distance regulations,

limiting their full potential.

"This authorisation significantly expands our ability to scale sustainable land management solutions, reinforcing our commitment to innovation in aerial agriculture."

**A Collective Effort to Drive Innovation** : The achievement of BVLOS approval reflects the dedication of industry professionals and academic experts working together. Among these contributors is the SEAD Artists consortium, which brings together organisations and individuals to create a unified voice for the agriculture and environmental sectors, ensuring meaningful engagement with drone technology and new innovations.

This initiative supports a data-driven approach to advancing environmental and agricultural applications, ensuring inclusivity across all relevant stakeholders, users, and representative bodies.

## INTRODUCING UGCS OPEN: FREE PROFESSIONAL DRONE FLIGHT PLANNING FOR EVERYONE



**D**rone pilots know the struggle. Most free flight planning tools lack the power and flexibility needed for real missions. But full-featured software can be expensive, especially if you're just getting started.

Introducing UgCS Open, a free version of UgCS that delivers professional-grade flight planning without trial restrictions or hidden costs. If you're into mapping, surveying, or automated drone missions, this is your chance to access the same tools used by industry experts.

What is UgCS Open?

UgCS Open is built on UgCS Expert, the software trusted by professionals for over a decade. You get full 3D mission planning, terrain-aware flight automation, and powerful drone control—without the usual barriers to entry.

### Here's what's included:

- Automated, precision flight planning
- 3D terrain-following missions
- Full offline functionality (no cloud dependence)
- An in-app tutorial to get you started

The only limits? Two routes per day, a max distance of 250m per route, and no DJI Cloud Connection. But that's still plenty of room to experiment, learn, and run real missions.

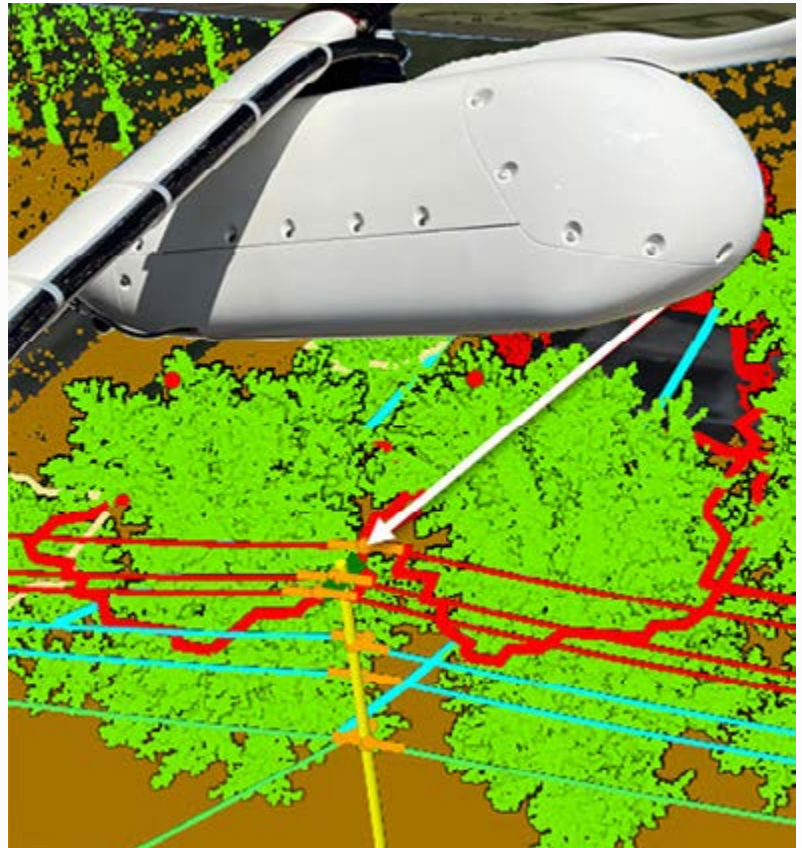
**Why Go Pro with UgCS Open? :** If you're new to drone mapping, inspections, or LiDAR surveying, this is the best way to start. You're not stuck with a demo version that expires in a week. You can actually use UgCS Open for real projects, refining your skills without spending a cent.

For experienced pilots, UgCS Open is a perfect testing ground—whether you're exploring UgCS for the first time or need a reliable, free tool for smaller jobs.

**Getting Started is Easy :** Not sure where to begin? No problem. UgCS Open includes an in-app onboarding tutorial, so you can start planning missions in minutes.

UgCS Open is available now. Completely free. No subscription. No trial period. Just professional-grade drone software at your fingertips.

## TELEDYNE GEOSPATIAL TO SHOWCASE INNOVATIVE AIRBORNE ASSET MANAGEMENT SOLUTION AT DISTRIBUTECH 2025



**T**eledyne Geospatial, a global leader in advanced lidar sensors and solutions, is excited to announce its participation at DISTRIBUTECH 2025, the largest and most influential transmission and distribution event in the United States, taking place from March 24-27 in Dallas, Texas. Teledyne Geospatial will exhibit its Network Surveyor solution alongside Aispeco, featuring the latest lidar sensors and Aispeco's flexible aircraft sensor mounting solution.

Designed specifically to meet the time constraints for electric utilities, Network Surveyor combines unmatched lidar technology with edge processing to deliver actionable data in near real time. Land with data that seamlessly feeds Pointerra3D's cloud-based rapid data processing engine to deliver insights on threats to your network infrastructure in hours, not weeks, to ensure compliance with NERC FAC-003 standards.

Visitors to the Teledyne Geospatial booth will have the opportunity to see the Optech EchoONE UAV Lidar payload alongside Aispeco's Heliux LITE, and Pointerra3D's processing engine.

The Optech EchoONE is an affordable, high-performance NDA compliant UAV Lidar sensor compatible with NDA compliant UAV solutions such as the Freefly Astro Max and the Inspired Flight IF800.

The Aispeco Heliux LITE is a flexible sensor mounting solution designed for multiple aircraft types without requiring any modification and supports a wide variety and number of sensors including Lidar, RGB, 4-band, hyperspectral and thermal.

"We are thrilled to be part of DISTRIBUTECH 2025 and showcase our Network Surveyor solution," said Matthew Johnson, Product Manager at Teledyne Optech. "Our collaboration with Aispeco and Pointerra3D delivers a complete, end-to-end solution that addresses the critical needs of the Electric Utility Vegetation Management and Asset Management functions. We look forward to demonstrating how our technology can help utilities enhance their operational efficiency and compliance."

## Hexagon completes acquisition of Septentrio expanding the reach of mission critical navigation and autonomy applications



**H**exagon announced the closing of the acquisition of Septentrio NV, a manufacturer of GPS/GNSS positioning technology for autonomy and mission-critical applications.

The acquisition of Septentrio will strengthen Hexagon's position as the leader in the resilient, assured positioning solutions market and provide customers greater accessibility to high-accuracy and high-performance positioning technology with the SWaP (Size, Weight and Power) optimised platform.

"Combining Hexagon's extensive positioning portfolio with Septentrio's innovative GNSS platforms will provide our customers with cutting-edge solutions, enabling autonomy and mission-critical applications for diverse markets," stated Gordon Dale, President of Hexagon's Autonomous Solutions division. "This strategic step allows us to push boundaries to deliver technology and products with the lowest SWaP, putting Hexagon at the forefront of the industry."

The combined portfolios will accelerate the adoption of autonomous systems in existing markets and address the needs of emerging high-growth segments like robotics, UAVs, autonomy and other mission-critical applications.

"We are excited to join Hexagon to leverage our combined strengths and deliver greater value to our customers, employees and stakeholders," stated Antoon De Proft, CEO of Septentrio. "This will accelerate innovation, and we look forward to the many opportunities ahead."

Septentrio, headquartered in Leuven, Belgium will continue its business model of supplying state-of-the-art GNSS technology to its large base of OEM (original equipment manufacturer) customers.

## Aptella partners with XGRIDS to bring handheld laser scanning solutions to Australia, Southeast Asia, and New Zealand



**L**eading automation and positioning specialist, Aptella, is collaborating with XGRIDS to bring the Lixel K1 and Lixel L2 Pro series of handheld laser scanners to customers across Australia, Southeast Asia, and New Zealand.

The Lixel K1 and L2 series are designed for convenience and ease of use, enabling quick deployment across a wide range of applications. These compact, handheld devices integrate panoramic cameras and LiDAR technology to generate real-time, true-colour 3D models. The user-friendly design makes them suitable for professionals and 3D enthusiasts alike, providing an accessible solution for efficient and accurate data capture in industries such as construction, surveying, and facility management.

"Our partnership with XGRIDS allows us to offer practical and efficient laser scanning solutions that cater to various industries," says Martin Nix, CEO of Aptella. "The Lixel K1 and L2 Pro scanners provide our customers with accessible tools for rapid 3D data capture, supported by our dedicated team of specialists."

"We have long known about Aptella's expertise in the field of 3D laser scanning, and their unmatched reputation for providing the best support to their clients. We cannot wait to get this partnership up and running and bring our solutions to the Oceania and Southeast Asia markets through Aptella," said Dr. Zhao, Founder and CEO of XGRIDS.

With the growing need for portable and easy to use scanning technology, Aptella is committed to ensuring customers benefit from expert guidance and support. From initial consultation to deployment, training, and long-term technical assistance, Aptella's extensive network of product and application specialists will help businesses fully leverage XGRIDS handheld scanners for their specific operational needs.

By working closely with XGRIDS, Aptella is reinforcing its commitment to delivering innovative, practical solutions that enhance efficiency and streamline workflows for customers in diverse industries.

## 3D MAKERPRO LAUNCHES REVOLUTIONARY LIDAR-BASED EAGLE SERIES SPATIAL 3D SCANNERS



**3**D Makerpro, a trailblazer in consumer-friendly 3D scanning technology, announced the launch of its new Eagle Series Spatial 3D Scanners. Equipped with cutting-edge LiDAR and imaging sensors, these devices are designed to effortlessly capture spatial environment data for applications in reverse engineering, digital twinning, asset management, XR, precision mapping, and 3D printing.

**Advanced Features for Professional Accuracy :** The Eagle Series is distinguished by its capability to scan areas with a range of up to 140 meters, maintaining precision within 2 centimeters at a distance of 10 meters. This precision makes it an ideal tool for complex modeling projects where accuracy is crucial.

Weighing just 1.5 kilograms, its lightweight design, combined with a robust built-in battery that supports up to one hour of continuous operation, enhances its portability and reliability during extended use.

**Enhanced Imaging Capabilities :** The Eagle Series includes a Standard and a Max version. The Max version excels with four 48-megapixel cameras, enhancing scanning efficiency and producing vivid colors with up to 8K panoramic photos. With HDR mode integrated into the system, users can expect superior image quality even under challenging lighting conditions, making the device an exceptional choice for those seeking top-tier performance.

**Seamless Software Integration & User-Friendly Interface :** The Eagle scanners are designed to work effortlessly with RayStudio software, providing straightforward tools for both professionals and hobbyists. They allow users to process and export point clouds in formats like PLY, OBJ, and 3D Gaussian Splatting, among others.

The interface is thoughtfully crafted to balance user-friendliness with advanced functionality, ensuring a smooth and efficient experience for all users.

## SENTERA JOINS THERMAL BY FLIR PROGRAM, ELEVATES 6X THERMAL SENSOR SERIES FOR PRECISION UAS APPLICATIONS



**T**eledyne FLIR OEM, part of Teledyne Technologies Incorporated announced that Sentera Sensors and Drones, a leading provider of advanced sensors and data, has joined the Thermal by FLIR program. Integrating FLIR Boson® thermal camera modules into the Sentera 6X Thermal Series adds new high-precision thermal mapping capabilities to their integrated multispectral and RGB drone payload platform.

Designed for seamless integration with leading UAS platforms, the Sentera 6X Thermal Series support agriculture, outdoor, and industrial applications ranging from evaporation analysis, water stress monitoring, and forest fire detection to industrial inspections and infrastructure analysis.

"Precision thermal mapping has long been a challenge due to alignment and stitching issues. By combining FLIR's trusted thermal technology with Sentera's automated multispectral-assisted processing, we're making it easier for users to capture, process, and analyze high-quality thermal data with confidence," said Eric Taipale, chief technology officer, Sentera.

The NDAA-compliant Sentera 6X Thermal Series, including the 6X Thermal and 6X Thermal Pro, feature either the radiometric FLIR Boson 640R or 320R imager alongside four synchronized 3.2MP monochrome imagers and a 20MP RGB sensor.

"Sentera's innovative approach to combining thermal, multispectral, and visible imaging in a unified sensor package represents a market-changing innovation the Thermal by FLIR program was designed to support," said Jared Faraudo, vice president of product management, Teledyne FLIR OEM. "By incorporating our compact, high-performance radiometric Boson modules within advanced multispectral technology, Sentera delivers unprecedented thermal mapping accuracy paired with pixel-level temperature measurement data for agriculture to public safety applications."

Sentera 6X Thermal Series joins a growing ecosystem of innovative Thermal by FLIR products that solve critical problems across industries from agriculture to automotive to defense, including mobile devices, drones, augmented reality solutions, and wearables.

## u-blox ZED-X20P all-band GNSS receiver enables affordable global cm-level precision, customer sampling started

u-blox (SIX:UBXN), a global leader in positioning and short-range communication technologies for automotive, industrial, and consumer markets announced the launch and availability of its all-band GNSS module, the ZED-X20P. Designed to deliver global, centimeter-level location precision to the mass market, all at a total cost up to 90% less than traditional solutions. The ZED-X20P draws on u-blox's long-standing expertise in global navigation satellite system (GNSS) solutions to break down the technological and cost barriers to put worldwide, cm-level navigation capabilities within reach for numerous applications for the first time.

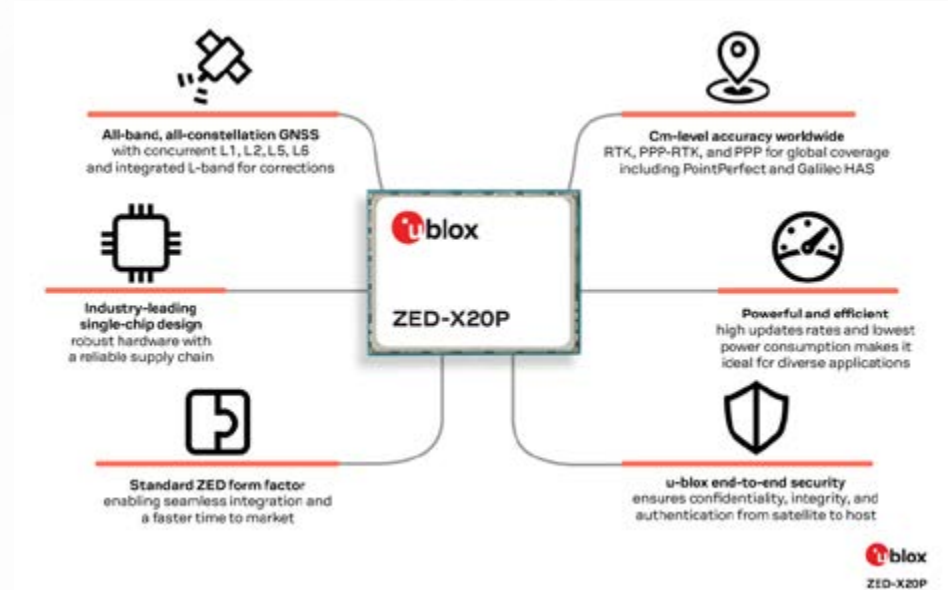
The compact and highly energy-efficient ZED-X20P is aimed primarily at the industrial sector, including smart construction, surveying, precision agriculture, rail, maritime, mining, and deformation monitoring. Other potential use cases include unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), ground robotics, delivery robots, smart cities, and virtual reality.

### Cost-effective global deployment :

The u-blox ZED-X20P is designed for global use at scale. It can receive concurrent signals on the L1, L2, L5, and L6 bands from four global GNSS constellations, as well as SBAS, QZSS, and NavIC.

To achieve high-precision positional information, the ZED-X20P is compatible with a range of GNSS correction services, including those delivered via satellite through L-band, with no extra hardware required. Customers can choose u-blox's PointPerfect, which offers a full range of PPP-RTK, network RTK, and global PPP correction services for solid performance and scalability to mass-market solutions. The module also offers built-in support for Galileo E6, meaning customers will have access to the free-to-use Galileo High Accuracy Service (HAS), as well as any standard-compliant RTK service, including free and commercial options, for maximum flexibility.

When paired with an all-band antenna such as the u-blox ANN-MB2, the ZED-X20P ensures optimal results, combining ease of



use with superior compatibility. Together, they create a one-stop-shop solution for achieving affordable high precision across a diverse array of applications.

**Security and ease of integration :** With location data integrity being critical to many of the ZED-X20P's target applications, the module is designed with end-to-end security to safeguard the navigation information the host equipment receives, by protecting one of the most important sensors in the end device.

Security measures include secure boot and signed firmware to prevent tampering and a built-in root of trust for securely storing cryptographic material. The module supports Galileo OSNMA (Open Service Navigation Message Authentication) and uses encrypted correction data to enhance security further. It features all-band frequency diversity, which provides robust protection against jamming. Additionally, all communications between the module and the host are encrypted and authenticated, ensuring secure data transfer.

The ZED-X20P is also designed for ease of integration into new and existing products. Combining all positioning functionality into a single compact module that incorporates the all-band receiver chip and correction

data processing eliminates the need for additional receivers or on-host processing. Moreover, by retaining the popular ZED form factor, the module offers an easy upgrade path for existing customers, including those using the ZED-F9P.

**Democratizing high-precision GNSS and inspiring innovation :** By breaking down traditional barriers for worldwide, high-precision GNSS technology, the u-blox ZED-X20P offers global cm-level navigation to the mass market for the first time. The engineering community now has unprecedented opportunities to enhance existing products, launch new offerings, or even create new product categories.

Stephan Zizala, CEO of u-blox, elaborated: "We are excited that customers can now start working with our new ZED-X20P module, which integrates a unique combination of u-blox GNSS single chip, firmware, and correction service within a module. It enables trustworthy centimeter-level positioning around the globe. Applications like mobile robots, precision agriculture, and automated construction machines will benefit from superior performance at a significantly lower cost than more traditional solutions."

## PRECISELY LAUNCHES GEO ADDRESSING AND DATA ENRICHMENT INNOVATIONS ON SNOWFLAKE MARKETPLACE

Precisely, the global leader in data integrity announced the availability of several new innovations across its location intelligence and data enrichment capabilities via Snowflake Marketplace. With the latest releases, joint customers can now leverage powerful geo addressing and data enrichment solutions natively within their Snowflake environments. By delivering accurate, verified, and geocoded addresses that are ready for enrichment, businesses can eliminate the costly inefficiencies of poor-quality address data. Additionally, enhanced location-based insights provide a deeper understanding of audiences and risk levels, enabling more confident, data-driven decision-making.

**Introducing Geo Addressing and Data Graph Snowflake Native Apps :** Customers can perform geo addressing tasks and enrichment natively within the Snowflake AI Data Cloud – reducing complexity, minimizing costs, and eliminating the need to navigate multiple providers.

Built on the Snowflake Native App Framework to provide a seamless user experience, the new Snowflake Native Apps from Precisely include:

**Precisely Geo Addressing for Snowflake** – offering powerful capabilities to verify, standardize, cleanse, and geocode addresses with precision. It includes reliable autocomplete functionality, address verification right down to the apartment or suite level, and simplifies data enrichment by providing the ability to accurately connect datasets via the PreciselyID.

**Precisely Data Graph for Snowflake** – providing easy access to the comprehensive Precisely data portfolio, including addresses, properties, businesses, natural hazards, boundaries, demographics, and more. It offers flexible query capabilities, robust data enrichment, and improved data discovery – all through a single API.

“Snowflake Native Apps allow customers to get more from their data faster by discovering and installing applications with just a few clicks that run natively in the AI Data Cloud,” said Fawad Qureshi, Global Field CTO at Snowflake. “Precisely’s deep expertise in location intelligence and data enrichment makes them an exceptional partner to help customers unlock these capabilities directly within their Snowflake environments.”



**Significantly Expanded Snowflake Marketplace Data Offerings :** Precisely has also increased the number of curated, enterprise-grade datasets available through the Snowflake Marketplace. These datasets enable industries such as retail, insurance, and real estate to uncover actionable insights and drive better outcomes across an even wider range of critical business uses.

**Newly added datasets include :** Precisely Risk Data – A comprehensive collection of datasets offering unparalleled insight into risk factors, including wildfire and property fire risk, flood and coastal risks, and earthquake propensity, as well as data to analyze crime risk and safety.

**Precisely Demographics** – Detailed demographic insights to help businesses understand customer types, preferences, and shifts in local and global population trends that are updated frequently to ensure accuracy and freshness.

These additions complement Precisely’s existing portfolio of data products available via the marketplace, including address and property attributes, boundaries, street-level data, and

points of interest (POI) data.

**New MapInfo Pro Snowflake Connector :** Additionally, Precisely unveiled its new MapInfo Pro Snowflake Connector, which allows users to view and edit Snowflake tables within MapInfo Pro. The Connector enables data teams and GIS analysts to perform advanced spatial analytics on Snowflake tables without introducing complex, time-consuming processes, streamlining workflows, and driving new efficiencies across the organization.

“There is a fast-growing need for trustworthy location-based insights and contextual data – whether it’s for driving more reliable AI outcomes or assessing climate risks and their impact on communities,” said Clarence Hempfield, SVP – Location Intelligence at Precisely. “We’re proud to be at the forefront of location intelligence and data enrichment innovation, and through further collaboration with Snowflake, we are ensuring that organizations can seamlessly access these insights without the need to move their data – allowing them to unlock new levels of efficiency, accuracy, and innovation.”

## ESRI COLLABORATES WITH GOOGLE MAPS PLATFORM TO OFFER HIGH-QUALITY PHOTOREALISTIC 3D TILES



At its 2025 Partner Conference, Esri—the global leader in location intelligence—announced a collaboration with Google Maps Platform. Enabling users to create highly detailed and visually immersive 3D maps and scenes, this collaboration integrates Google's Photorealistic 3D Tiles into the ArcGIS suite.

"We are excited to collaborate with Google Maps Platform and bring this valuable data to our user community," said Richard Cooke, Corporate Director of Global Business Development at Esri. "By making Google's Photorealistic 3D Tiles available for our users, it empowers them to enhance a wide-ranging set of innovative maps and apps with high-quality 3D Tiles that provide global coverage, fresh updates and are high-resolution for solving real-world challenges."

The integration of Google Maps Platform's Photorealistic 3D Tiles into ArcGIS will allow users to construct richer maps and scenes, supporting analytics, across a variety of applications including urban planning, real estate, and public sector infrastructure projects. This collaboration is part of Esri's longstanding commitment to providing users with high-quality geospatial data and 3D basemap capabilities.

"Users have long sought more detailed and photorealistic 3D basemaps," said Deane Kensok, ArcGIS Content CTO at Esri. "This 3D basemap will be a valuable addition to our basemap collection, providing a more realistic and detailed view of metropolitan areas for large parts of the world. It can be used on its own or seamlessly integrated with users' data, enhancing the visual context and enabling more detailed and accurate analysis."

Access to high-fidelity 3D meshes provides users with the ability to visualize projects such as urban development plans, real estate planning, and AEC projects, all in realistic environments. This allows users to explore and overlay their own data, like points of interest or community resources, to create comprehensive and detailed maps. This new integration also empowers users to perform interactive analyses, such as shadow studies, lines of sight, and viewsheds. As a result, stakeholders can see a clear and detailed representation of potential future outcomes within a visually familiar landscape.

Esri customers will gain access to the world's most comprehensive photorealistic 3D map with Google Maps Platform's high-resolution Photorealistic 3D Tiles, available in 2,500 cities across 49 countries. All this content will be available through users' subscriptions to ArcGIS Online.

"We know creators and developers across platforms want rich, photorealistic 3D visualizations and that is why we are excited to bring Google Maps Platform's Photorealistic 3D Tiles to ArcGIS," said Eugene Yeh, Director of Go-to-Market for Google Maps Platform. "We look forward to seeing how Esri's global community of geospatial professionals uses 3D Tiles to enrich their understanding of the world."

## SIMACTIVE USED FOR CORRIDOR MAPPING ALONG COASTS

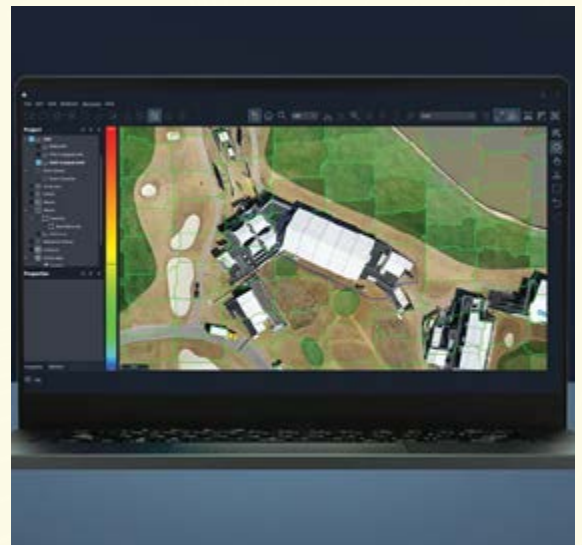


SimActive announces the use of its Correlator3D product by the US Army Corps of Engineers for corridor mapping. The software is used to process imagery and create mapping products in conjunction with topo-bathy lidar systems.

"Correlator3D is by far the easiest to use and fastest image processing software out there."

As part of the Corps of Engineers, the Joint Airborne Lidar Bathymetry Technical Center of Expertise (JALBTCX) uses the most advanced sensors to map US coastal shorelines. In combination with topo-bathy lidar, imagery is collected with a Phase One 150MP camera. Surfaces are generated from the lidar data and imported into Correlator 3D along with the imagery to rapidly produce blocks of orthomosaics used for all types of assessments.

"Correlator3D is by far the easiest to use and fastest image processing software out there", said J. Heath Harwood, Physical Scientist at the US Army Corps of Engineers. "Its DEM editing and mosaic editing tools are outstanding."





# PLANET AND ANTHROPIC PARTNER TO USE CLAUDE'S ADVANCED AI CAPABILITIES TO TURN GEOSPATIAL SATELLITE IMAGERY INTO ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS



**P**lanet Labs PBC a leading provider of daily data and insights about Earth announced that it will begin using Anthropic's Claude, one of the world's most trusted Large Language Models (LLMs), to revolutionize how we understand and analyze our changing planet. By using Claude on Planet's daily scan of the Earth, Planet could create powerful new capabilities for users across government and business.

This collaboration will combine Planet's deep stack of daily geospatial data with Claude's advanced AI capabilities, including Claude's sophisticated reasoning and pattern recognition abilities to analyze complex visual information at scale and uncover insights about our changing planet. Planet's data represents one of the largest continuous Earth observation datasets ever created, and with Claude, could enable near real-time pattern recognition and anomaly detection at global scale.

"Anthropic's advanced AI capabilities have the potential to rapidly change how analysts fundamentally use and understand satellite data. By using Claude on our satellite imagery, we take a significant step towards making it easier to extract value from satellite data. From governments who can scan large areas for new threats to a small holder farmer trying to improve crop yields, from firefighters in California to conservation NGOs in the Congo, this can help users get value from our data faster," said Planet CEO and co-founder Will Marshall. "AI models also greatly benefit from robust stacks of data, like ours, so I am very excited to see what the future holds for this collaboration."

"Claude will help Planet identify and analyze patterns in complex geospatial data at a scale and speed previously impossible. Claude's unique ability to interpret vast amounts of data could improve how the world detects environmental changes, monitors global infrastructure, and responds

to natural disasters," said Dario Amodei, Anthropic's CEO and cofounder.

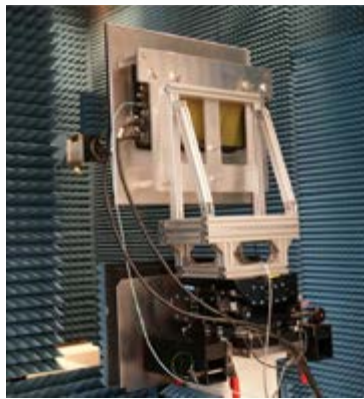
This announcement comes following Planet's AI Symposium, a virtual event where leading experts joined Planet leaders to discuss the intersection of AI and Earth observation data. The symposium explored how AI's pattern recognition capabilities could transform our understanding of Earth observation data, with discussions ranging from practical applications in environmental monitoring to broader implications for understanding global commerce.

Both Planet and Anthropic are Public Benefit Companies, which speaks to their mutual commitment to responsible business operations and technical innovation. Due to their shared values, both companies aim to leverage AI models and satellite data responsibly to create value for users and to ensure a safe and secure world.

# HENSOLDT IS INVESTING MILLIONS IN A NEW RADAR ANECHOIC CHAMBER

The sensor solutions provider HENSOLDT is further expanding its production capacities. A new anechoic chamber for SPEXER radars has been put into operation at the Ulm site. The total investment volume amounts to more than one million euros.

The SPEXER radar family offers high-performance surveillance radars for various ranges for automatic detection and classification of ground, sea and low-flying air targets. The SPEXER 2000 is part of the new Skyrainger 30 cannon-based air defence vehicle from Rheinmetall Air Defence. It is also used in the German programs cUAS Feldlager (ASUL), qualified air defence, HoWISM (high-energy laser for drone defence) and 'Near and Very Short Range Air Defence System' NNbS, among others.



The measurement of AESA (Active Electronically Scanning Array) antennas is one of the most demanding high-frequency measurement methods for radar systems. The advantage of the new anechoic chamber is the fully automated data acquisition and analysis for far-field and near-field antenna measurements. In addition, the throughput time for measuring an antenna is reduced, making the process even more efficient.

"In view of geopolitical developments, the urgency of delivering products and solutions quickly and on a large scale is clearly noticeable," says HENSOLDT Head of Production Gregor Schwab. "By expanding our capacities and switching to series production, we will more than triple the production of our SPEXER radars over the next three years."

## NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND AWARDS KRATOS ADDITIONAL \$59.3M FOR BQM-177A SUBSONIC AERIAL TARGET SYSTEMS



Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. a Technology Company in the Defense, National Security and Global Markets, and industry-leading provider of high-performance, jet-powered unmanned aerial systems, announced that Kratos has received \$59,338,010 for an additional 70 BQM-177A Subsonic Aerial Target (SSAT) aircraft through the exercise of the contract option for Full Rate Production (FRP) Lot 6. When combined with the base award and exercise of FRP Lot 5, the resulting overall value of FRP Lots 4 through 6 totals \$177,702,962. Total contract value if the remaining option for Lot 7 is exercised at the maximum production quantity will be \$227,647,890.

Steve Fendley, President of Kratos Unmanned Systems Division, said, "Since the first Full Rate Production contract award in October 2020, the world has undergone impactful economic and political shifts creating significant production challenges across our industry and increased need for development, test, and training associated with our country's current and upcoming weapons systems. On behalf of all the dedicated men and women at Kratos, we will collectively continue to do our utmost to support our warfighters with this high-fidelity threat surrogate."

The majority of the work under this contract will be conducted in Kratos facilities in Sacramento, CA, and Fort Walton Beach, FL.

# Collins Aerospace Approved to Begin FRP of MAPS Gen II System

Collins Aerospace, an RTX business, has received approval for Full Rate Production of the Mounted Assured Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) Generation II system (MAPS GEN II).

Following the fifth delivery order of the jam-and-spoof-resistant navigation solution, Collins will produce thousands of MAPS units for installation on U.S. Army and U.S. Marines Corps' combat ground vehicles including military watercraft. MAPS fuses sensor data including satellite navigation information and secured positioning, navigation and timing data for crewed and uncrewed ground vehicles.

"Through close coordination with our customer, we've met the modernized fielding



requirements for MAPS while reducing production costs," said Sandy Brown, vice president and general manager for Resilient Navigation Solutions, Collins Aerospace. "MAPS GEN II is a critical part of the DOD's modernization goals and will provide the warfighter with trusted access to Assured PNT when they need it most."

MAPS GEN II is comprised of the company's NavHub™-100 navigation system and Multi-Sensor Antenna System (MSAS-100) and supports multiple mission sets including combat, artillery fires, air and missile defense, ship-to-shore and contested logistics. Collins offers additional scalable configurations of NavHub™-100 navigation system and Multi-Sensor Antenna System (MSAS-100).

## General Atomics Introduces Quadratix Software Enterprise

General Atomics is reshaping its software enterprise for the future, merging efforts from across business lines into a single technology grid delivering all-domain response and information dominance.

The new Quadratix enterprise will bond GA's large software workforce and extensive suite of systems under a unified umbrella, merging solutions for:

- Autonomy, artificial intelligence and machine learning
- Airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
- Land-based advanced sensing
- Sea-based threat detection
- Space-based missions and satellite operations
- Cyber exploitation
- Unified data fusion and visualization

This new cross-functional collaboration is designed to promote interoperability across all GA product lines, providing streamlined options for customers hoping to capitalize on the breadth and depth of General Atomics' expertise.

As one of the largest privately held defense companies in the world, General Atomics has been a disruptive force in aerospace and defense technology for decades, employing more than 1,000 software engineers, programmers and related experts. Our new Quadratix enterprise merges software efforts from across the company's various affiliate divisions, including Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI); Electromagnetic Systems Group (GA-EMS); Integrated



Intelligence, Inc. (GA-III), and other General Atomics holdings. The move offers new options for both current and future GA customers. One example is the unmanned aircraft delivered by GA-ASI, with its industry-leading Predator® series of UAS and future-forward autonomous jets, which will benefit from increased collaboration on autonomy, AI and ML produced by other GA divisions.

"We've transcended a one-for-one software build and arrived at an integrated suite of software solutions for our aircraft and our customers," said GA-ASI CEO Linden Blue. "We're moving out fast to meet our users' toughest challenges by grouping these solutions together under the Quadratix umbrella."

GA's transformational technologies continue to revolutionize how global military forces address complex challenges and respond to evolving threats. From data processing, exploitation, and dissemination to data fusion and real-time situational awareness, our vertically integrated software teams work closely with our hardware engineers to build versatile, flexible systems that mesh seamlessly behind the scenes.

"Quadratix integrates across our full catalog of subordinate systems to command, control, collect, catalog, and communicate information and intelligence to customers," said Blue. "Built from our existing integrated network of proven systems and subsystems, Quadratix is GA's end-to-end solution for providing information dominance."

## CRREL ACQUIRES THEMIS UGV FROM MILREM ROBOTICS



The U.S. Army's Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL) has acquired a TheMIS Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV) equipped with the MIFIK Intelligent Functions Kit from Milrem Robotics. This cutting-edge technology will be used for further research in extreme cold environments in Arctic regions.

The TheMIS UGV is a modular and robust unmanned platform designed for various applications, including logistics, reconnaissance, and operational support. In its Cargo configuration, the TheMIS enables troops to effortlessly transport supplies, equipment, and extra weapons to the mission area, reducing soldiers' cognitive load and the need for manpower.

The integration of MIFIK further enhances the platform with autonomous navigation, making it indispensable for operations in challenging terrain and climate conditions.

The TheMIS UGV is part of robotics programs or in service in 19 countries, making it the most widely used UGV in its size class.

"The TheMIS is the most mature UGV on the market. Its integration into multiple nations' combat formations reduces customers' overall integration and procurement risk," said Patrick Shepherd, Chief Sales Officer at Milrem Robotics. "Milrem has the lessons learned and depth of experience to ensure a smooth integration into the military forces."

The acquisition of this system aligns with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mission to advance technological innovation in support of national security and operational readiness. The TheMIS UGV will be deployed in various experimental and operational scenarios to assess its capabilities and contribute to ongoing research into autonomous systems for cold-weather operations.

CRREL is part of the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) and is dedicated to solving interdisciplinary challenges in cold and complex environments through engineering and scientific research. CRREL supports military and civilian operations by developing innovative solutions for infrastructure, mobility, and operational effectiveness in extreme climates.

## Experience and Innovation Drive sUAS Development at Aurora



**A**urora Flight Sciences, a Boeing company, has been driving innovation in small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS), developing cutting-edge platforms that push the boundaries of endurance, autonomy, and adaptability. From the company's first ultra-light-weight reconnaissance drone to today's long-range electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) platform, Aurora's sUAS have delivered mission-critical performance where it matters most.

**Skate:** In 2010, Aurora debuted its first sUAS, called Skate. The 1-kilogram, all-electric sUAS was designed for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions; target acquisition and detection; and search-and-rescue operations. Made of ruggedized foam, the Skate airframe could be deployed from a standard military pack in seconds. It featured an electro-optical video payload and an optional infrared camera for nighttime missions.

Twin independently articulating motor pods allowed Skate to rapidly transition between vertical and horizontal flight to achieve high maneuverability and to increase endurance to levels far beyond those of traditional eVTOL drones at the time. Skate was also highly modular and lacked traditional fasteners. Instead, components were attached with magnets for easy assembly and disassembly.

**Red Team:** As sUAS technology became more common, the need for counter-UAS (C-UAS) solutions grew. Aurora's Red Team unmanned aerial targets included quadcopter and fixed-wing drones designed for testing and training C-UAS platforms. The fully autonomous Red Team platforms could mimic high-performance improvised threats. They required minimal operator training and could be launched and recovered in any terrain.

The Red Team Multi-Rotor offered VTOL capabilities and an open-architecture modular payload bay, which supported the integration of advanced capabilities such as swarming, 4G communications, and GPS-denied navigation. The Red Team Fixed-Wing had a top speed of 130mph and was Aurora's second sUAS that used foam construction, which reduced cost and weight and made the aircraft well-suited to its role as an aerial target.

Aurora continues to use its Red Team drone fleet for testing and development of various autonomous capabilities and multi-vehicle teaming.

**Modular Intercept Drone Avionics Set (MIDAS):** In 2021, Aurora's MIDAS, an AI-enabled C-UAS platform, participated in the Pentagon's first counter drone technology demonstration in Yuma, AZ. Outfitted with optical sensors and a customized payload, MIDAS was designed to autonomously intercept and defeat multiple adversary sUAS targets in a single flight. MIDAS fired bolo projectiles that entangled the target's propellers and disabled the vehicle without endangering bystanders.

MIDAS demonstrated advanced autonomous capabilities including the use of perception and guidance, navigation, and control (GNC) algorithms to search for, track, and target adversary drones within range of the vehicle's perception sensors. These algorithms provided a localized position of the target in real time and determined its autonomous intercept and firing solution. The vehicle then used the information from these algorithms to provide control commands to the autopilot system and fire the drone disablement device.

**SKIRON-X and SKIRON-XLE:** Aurora's past platforms have directly influenced today's sUAS innovations through advancements in endurance, communication reliability, autonomy, and more.

## BARRACUDA-500 SELECTED TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE ENTERPRISE TEST VEHICLE PROTOTYPE PROJECT



**T**he Air Force Armament Directorate (EB) and the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) have selected Anduril's Barracuda-500 autonomous air vehicle (AAV) to move forward to the next phase of the Enterprise Test Vehicle (ETV) prototype project. The ETV program aims to create a highly-producible, modular, and affordable air vehicle that will serve as the baseline architecture for large-scale production of next-generation airborne platforms.

Within seven months of being selected as part of the ETV effort, Anduril optimized the Barracuda-500 design to execute a successful flight test, demonstrating how Barracuda's simple and modular design - as well as Anduril's approach and commitment to developing capabilities ahead of a specific customer's need - facilitates rapid development, testing, and deployment of disruptive capabilities to warfighters.

Over the next phase of the effort, Anduril will demonstrate Barracuda-500's autonomous teaming capabilities, further prove out the manufacturability of the system, and highlight the modular architecture that enables its adaptability to future mission needs. The goals of ETV - including its emphasis on autonomy, producibility, affordability, modularity, and speed of delivery - are squarely aligned with the design, development, and manufacturing philosophy that underpins Anduril's Barracuda family of autonomous air vehicles.

**Flight Test:** Anduril's selection follows rigorous testing and evaluation of the Barracuda-500 AAV. In September 2024, Anduril executed a successful flight test of Barracuda-500 in close partnership with EB and DIU. The end-to-end flight test was representative of future operational employment of Barracuda-500 and encompassed pre-mission planning, successful vertical launch from a cell designed to emulate palletized employment from air-lift aircraft, autonomous navigation and flight for over 30 minutes, successful capture of a GPS coordinate target identified in Lattice, and autonomous terminal guidance to the target.

**Next Steps:** Later this year, Anduril will execute a series of flight tests that demonstrate the collaborative autonomous capabilities of Barracuda-500, including simultaneous vertical launch of multiple Barracuda-500 systems, in flight system-to-system communications, and how Lattice for Mission Autonomy enables the execution of novel collaborative autonomous behaviors designed to increase effectiveness in contested environments.

## GA-ASI FLIES GOVERNMENT REFERENCE AUTONOMY STACK AT ORANGE FLAG 25-1



General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) achieved another major milestone in the development of Unmanned Combat Air Vehicles (UCAVs) by flying U.S. government-provided autonomy software aboard a company-owned MQ-20 Avenger®. The demonstration was part of the Air Force Test Center's all-domain test series called Orange Flag 25-1, which took place February 19-21 at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

The demonstration included the use of a government-provided Pilot Vehicle Interface (PVI), showcasing GA-ASI's commitment to advancing its UCAV ecosystem through collaboration with partners and government entities and integrating cutting-edge technologies. Avenger is a jet-powered UAS used extensively by GA-ASI as a test bed for future Autonomous Collaborative Platforms.

GA-ASI also demonstrated the ability to rapidly swap between autonomy systems midflight over Proliferated Low Earth Orbit (PLEO) satellites utilizing an autonomy product from Shield AI.

Orange Flag 25-1 is part of the larger Orange Flag Evaluation and Demonstration Event series. This event brought together various stakeholders to test and validate advanced aerospace technologies in realistic operational scenarios.

The government-provided autonomy software - known as a reference autonomy stack - was integrated into the GA-ASI Avenger and demonstrated autonomous flight operation capabilities focused on conducting air-to-air engagements. The government-provided PVI enabled seamless control and monitoring of the autonomy stack, highlighting the interoperability and flexibility of GA-ASI's UCAV ecosystem. The Shield AI stack demonstrated autonomy skills for safe administrative phases of flight.

What the flights proved was that GA-ASI aircraft can quickly go from company-written software, to government-provided, to other vendors' software as needed. This reinforces that the new generations of GA-ASI's UCAVs can seamlessly get upgrades as fast as developers finish them. Just as a mobile phone can get new and better features with each update, so too can new UCAVs get more capable and more versatile.

"This demonstration marks a significant achievement in our ongoing efforts to operationalize autonomy for UCAVs," said GA-ASI Vice President of Advanced Programs Michael Atwood. "Flying the government reference autonomy stack at Orange Flag 25-1 and utilizing the government-provided PVI underscores our commitment to delivering robust and adaptable autonomy solutions for the warfighter. We especially appreciate and salute the support we received from the 309th Software Engineering Group."

## LEONARDO AND BAYKAR SIGN A PARTNERSHIP FOR UNMANNED TECHNOLOGIES



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed today between Baykar Technologies and Leonardo for the development of unmanned technologies. The agreement is based on the industrial synergies and complementarities of the two companies in the unmanned sector. The scope of the Joint Venture, based in Italy, includes the design, development, production, and maintenance of unmanned aerial systems.

This partnership will leverage Baykar's industry-leading unmanned platforms, which have demonstrated operational effectiveness across various global markets, and Leonardo's expertise in mission systems, payload design, and related aerospace certification in Europe. The European market for the next ten years, covering unmanned fighters, armed surveillance drones, and deep strike drones, is projected to reach \$100 billion.

Both companies, currently engaged in the development and production of UAVs, electronic systems, payloads, C4I (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence), Artificial Intelligence, integrated mission systems, space equipment, and services, will ensure interoperability within multi-domain ecosystems.

Through this agreement, Leonardo and Baykar aim to jointly pursue opportunities in both the European and international markets, also capitalizing on additional synergies in the space sector.

"With Baykar - says Roberto Cingolani, CEO and General Manager of Leonardo - we are creating a new reference player in unmanned technologies, which will play an increasingly central role in the future of Defense. Today, we are signing a new international alliance that marks a significant leap forward in unmanned systems, opening up new market opportunities, particularly in Europe. The defense industry is facing unprecedented challenges, such as unmanned systems, artificial intelligence, sixth-generation fighters, cybersecurity, and space. In this context, we are convinced that technological cooperation is both necessary and urgent to accelerate progress and ensure global security."

Selçuk Bayraktar, Chairman and CTO of Baykar, stated: "As the global leader in armed UAV development, production, and export in the world, Baykar has always focused on pushing the boundaries of innovation in unmanned aviation. Leonardo's globally renowned capability in C4I systems and its advanced AI technology backbone make this collaboration even more impactful. This strategic partnership with Leonardo marks a significant milestone in expanding our technological footprint and strengthening our presence in the world. Baykar will combine ethical AI-driven technologies together with Leonardo's immense capability in the AI technologies to develop next-generation solutions that will define the future of unmanned aerial systems. Together, this synergy will bring ultimate AI-driven air supremacy for the future."

## TEKEVER and USSOCOM Successfully Complete Operational Exercise

**T**EKEVER has successfully completed an operational exercise with U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) at Camp Roberts, California. The exercise demonstrated the effectiveness of TEKEVER's cutting-edge technology in supporting special operations missions.

The exercise highlighted the advanced capabilities of TEKEVER's UAS platforms, combining highly reliable hardware with state-of-the-art artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms. This combination ensures superior situational awareness, rapid responsiveness, and enhanced resilience, even in highly contested electronic environments where secure communications and continuous intelligence gathering are critical.

At the centre of the successful demonstration was the TEKEVER AR3 UAS, whose Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) capability allows it to operate without the need for additional launch or recovery equipment. This unique feature makes it particularly well-suited to supporting discreet, high-impact operations in remote and austere environments. With a low acoustic and visual signature, the AR3 ensures effective, covert surveillance and reconnaissance.



The AR3's interchangeable multi-sensor payload, which includes electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) cameras, radar, and Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) capabilities, provided real-time intelligence gathering across a wide range of operational scenarios. This flexibility ensures that forces on the ground receive actionable intelligence in even the most complex environments.

Reflecting on the successful completion of the exercise, Paulo Ferro, TEKEVER Strategic Development

Director, highlighted the company's continued focus on innovation and operational excellence:

"By combining cutting-edge AI with highly reliable and field-proven hardware, TEKEVER provides special operations forces with the best tools to enhance their decision-making and effectiveness in the most challenging environments. This exercise demonstrated our ability to operate in electronically contested environments while ensuring reliable intelligence and secure communications at all times."

## GA-ASI WELCOMES USAF DESIGNATION FOR NEW CCA: YFQ-42A

**G**eneral Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. welcomes the U.S. Air Force's designation for its Collaborative Combat Aircraft: the new uncrewed jet fighter will be called the YFQ-42A. The announcement followed an earlier USAF decision in 2024 that GA-ASI was selected to develop and build the YFQ-42A.

"We're proud to get a new official aircraft designation," said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. "YFQ-42A continues a long and distinguished history for GA-ASI that dates back to the 1990s and the debut of the RQ-1 Predator®, which later changed to MQ-1 Predator. That uncrewed aircraft gave way to the MQ-9A Reaper®, the MQ-20 Avenger®, our new MQ-9B SkyGuardian® and SeaGuardian®, and many others.

"These aircraft represent an unrivaled history of capable, dependable uncrewed platforms that meet the needs of America's warfighters and point the way to a significant new era for airpower."

The Air Force selected YFQ-42A as the Mission Design Series (MDS) for GA-ASI's CCA prototype, representing the first in a new generation of unmanned fighter aircraft. YFQ-42A will be critical in securing air dominance for the Joint Force in future conflicts, leveraging autonomous capabilities and crewed-uncrewed teaming to defeat enemy threats in contested environments.



The Air Force is developing Autonomous Collaborative Platforms to maintain its air superiority. Semi-autonomous aircraft, like YFQ-42A, will enhance flexibility, affordability, and mission effectiveness. YFQ-42A will enhance air superiority as a flexible, affordable force multiplier. It is designed to integrate seamlessly with current and next-generation crewed aircraft, expanding mission capabilities and ensuring continued air dominance. In short, YFQ-42A provides fighter capacity - affordable mass - at a lower cost and on a threat-relevant timeline.

The YFQ-42A designation follows the Air Force's

decision to designate GA-ASI's highly common predecessor aircraft as the XQ-67A Off-Board Sensing Station. The XQ-67A was ordered by the Air Force Research Lab to support the development of concepts necessary to implement the vision for CCA.

In the Air Force system, an "X" plane is designed for testing and experimentation, while "Y" describes initial production-representative aircraft, usually ahead of a formal program. "F" is for fighter and "Q" designates an uncrewed aircraft. Once the production-representative aircraft moves into production, the "Y" will drop from the prefix.

## SCHIEBEL CAMCOPTER S-100 UAS SELECTED BY EDA FOR CROSS-DOMAIN LOGISTICS PROGRAMME



Under the Hub for European Defence Innovation (HEDI), EDA has established the “Autonomous Systems for Cross-Domain Logistics (Air and Land)” programme and selected Schiebel’s CAMCOPTER® S-100 for the heavy-lift Vertical Takeoff and Landing (VTOL) Unmanned Air System category.

The large-scale initiative, hosted by the Italian Army, will focus on collaborative experimentation of UAS and Unmanned Ground Systems (UGS). In June and July 2025, several simulated missions, e.g. last-mile resupply in hostile environments, will be demonstrated. The CAMCOPTER® S-100 was selected for the above 50kg payload category, and will conduct the trials together with two smaller UAS and three UGS.

The role of autonomous systems in today’s military is increasingly requiring interoperability, particularly for cross-domain operations and logistical support, significantly enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in challenging environments.

HEDI aims at accelerating and streamlining the integration of emerging technologies into military applications through immersive operational and technical field testing in a collaborative and agile environment.

“This programme, which is the first of its kind by EDA, closely follows three other tenders won by Schiebel in the European Union, including a new contract for the European Maritime Safety Agency, as well as the European Defence Fund’s SEACURE and OPTIMAS consortiums. With its unrivalled experience, maturity and proven performance, the S-100 is the logical choice and we’re looking forward to showcase our capabilities at the upcoming experimentation,” said Hans Georg Schiebel, Chairman of the Schiebel Group.

## Sikorsky Invites Commercial Helicopter Operators to Guide Next Gen Vertical Lift



Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company has formed a group of leading commercial customers to shape the ongoing development and integration of transformative technologies for next-generation vertical takeoff and landing aircraft.

The Sikorsky Customer Advisory Group, whose launch members include Bristow, Flexjet, HeliOffshore, Macquarie, Omni Helicopters International, Shell and VIH Aviation Group, will work closely with Sikorsky to define and establish real-world requirements for the integration of these technologies into future vertical lift systems. This collaboration will help accelerate the advancement and implementation of Autonomy, Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and Hybrid-Electric Propulsion, ultimately driving innovation and growth in the industry.

“Sikorsky’s commitment to innovation and transformation is at the core of what we do, and we are excited to have these leading commercial customers join us on this journey,” said Leon Silva, vice president of Global Commercial and Military Systems at Sikorsky. “Their expertise and insights will be invaluable as we continue to develop and refine our Hybrid-Electric Propulsion, Autonomy, and UAS technologies. Together, we will shape the future of vertical lift and create new opportunities for our industry.”

The Sikorsky Customer Advisory Group will provide operators with an opportunity to provide feedback, share operational challenges and shape Sikorsky’s future product portfolio. Collaboration will help Sikorsky to better understand its customers’ needs and to develop solutions that meet their evolving requirements. Sikorsky looks forward to welcoming additional members to the group.

Sikorsky Innovations, the company’s rapid prototyping group, is developing a family of VTOL aircraft systems, with hybrid-electric propulsion and Sikorsky’s MATRIX™ flight autonomy as enabling technologies.

The initial Sikorsky Customer Advisory Group members are:

- Dave Stepanek FRAeS, executive vice president and chief transformation officer, Bristow
- Eli Flint, president, Flexjet Vertical Lift
- Tim Rolfe, CEO, HeliOffshore
- Greg A. Allen, COO, Macquarie Rotorcraft Leasing
- Jeremy Akel, group chief executive officer, Omni Helicopters International
- Mark Boumans, manager Air Transport Safety, Shell
- Ken Norie, president & CEO, VIH Aviation Group

## GOKBERK SUCCESSFULLY ELIMINATES FPV DRONE THREATS

**A**SELSAN, Türkiye's leading defense company, continues to take important steps in the field of directed energy weapons, one of the new generation technologies. Previously proven effective against rotary- and fixed-wing kamikaze drones, GÖKBERK now showcased its advanced capabilities by detecting, autonomously tracking, and eliminating FPV drones across multiple test scenarios, demonstrating exceptional speed and precision in engagement.

As a critical component of Steel Dome, GÖKBERK stands out as a near-field air defense weapon system that enables hard kill-soft kill destruction of threats such as mini/micro UAVs and IEDs. GÖKBERK brings together ASELSAN's IHTAR platform and the laser weapon on a platform with 6x6 mobile deployment capability instead of a distributed architecture. Developed with contributions from key industry partners including TÜBITAK BILGEM, all major subcomponents of GÖKBERK have been designed and produced domestically, reinforcing Türkiye's defense industry autonomy. With GÖKBERK, ASELSAN is developing a new and critical system that will serve within the Steel Dome air defense system.

GÖKBERK uses an indigenous laser source with high beam quality for hard kill destruction of targets, while also providing soft kill destruction with an electronic jammer developed by ASELSAN. The



system can perform very precise target tracking with various electro-optical systems on the guidance unit. With artificial intelligence-supported algorithms, the system's tracking and identification capabilities are maximized, which enables GÖKBERK to destroy the threats in the target set in a very short time. Thanks to the cooler designed for 24/7 operation, GÖKBERK can fire uninterruptedly for a long time. The system, which creates maximum impact with minimum power,

stands out as a cost-effective solution.

GÖKBERK will play a critical role in the defense of fixed facilities such as military bases, airports, power plants and oil refineries, and will have a wide range of applications thanks to its mobile deployment capability. With the data obtained from the firing tests and trials of GÖKBERK conducted under different weather conditions, improvement and development work on the system continues.

## OVERWATCH AND MILREM ROBOTICS ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC COLLABORATION TO ADVANCE UNMANNED DEFENCE CAPABILITIES

**O**verwatch, a British aerospace and defence business specialising in the design and manufacture of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and Milrem Robotics, the world's leading robotics and autonomous systems developer, have signed a collaboration agreement to drive product development, production, and sales of cutting-edge unmanned defence solutions worldwide.

Under this collaboration, Overwatch and Milrem Robotics will undertake joint research and development assessments to explore possibilities for integrating capabilities, payloads, and effects between Overwatch's UAVs and Milrem Robotics' unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs), with the aim of developing highly interoperable unmanned systems.

Both parties will engage in collaborative test



and evaluation efforts to advance operational capabilities and deliver enhanced performance under realistic mission conditions.

"Overwatch is thrilled to embark on this strategic collaboration with Milrem Robotics," said

Drew Michael, CEO at Overwatch. "By leveraging our respective strengths in UAV and UGV technologies, we aim to deliver unparalleled unmanned defence capabilities to meet the evolving needs of our customers worldwide."

"We look forward to working closely with Overwatch to expand our product portfolios and address emerging market demands," said Kuldar Väärsti, CEO of Milrem Robotics. "By combining our expertise and jointly exploring R&D and testing, we expect to develop integrated solutions that will significantly enhance operational effectiveness and mission success for our clients," he added.

The companies will also coordinate marketing activities to promote each other's products beyond their domestic markets, opening up new business opportunities across global defence sectors.



## CONTRACT VALUED AT UP TO \$19.1M FOR THE BQM-177A SUBSONIC AERIAL TARGET SYSTEM



**K**ratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. a technology company in the defense, national security and global markets, and industry-leading provider of high-performance, jet-powered unmanned aerial systems, announced that Kratos was awarded \$3,399,506 from the U.S. Navy for the base year of its next Contractor Logistics Support and Engineering Services contract supporting BQM-177A aerial target system operations.

Steve Fendley, President of Kratos Unmanned Systems Division, said, "Often underestimated, logistics represents the behind-the-scenes enabler to system readiness. This contract illustrates the Navy's commitment to readiness, and we're equally committed to delivering readiness of the BQM-177A system and the critical capability it provides to the Navy for missions throughout each year."

If all four option years awarded under this contract are exercised, this contract has a potential value of \$19,118,645 with work conducted primarily in Kratos facilities in Sacramento and at Point Mugu, CA.

## Introducing HELIUS - a 249g Coaxial Nano UAV from Ascent AeroSystems



**A**scent AeroSystems, the world's leading manufacturer of compact, high-performance, aircraft-grade coaxial unmanned aerial systems introduced HELIUS™, the company's first entry into the sub-250g UAV sector. Debuted at VERTICON (formerly HAI Heli-Expo), in Dallas, Texas, HELIUS is designed to be an affordable AI-enabled, American Made, NDAA-compliant option for law enforcement, emergency response, government, and industrial enterprise operators looking to upgrade or replace other systems.

"Bringing our coaxial propulsion technology to a sub-250g platform while maintaining the durability, performance, and reliability Ascent products are known for has been one of the most rewarding challenges we've undertaken," said Peter Fuchs, Co-founder and CEO of Ascent AeroSystems.

"HELIUS delivers unmatched capability in its class at a competitive price. It is the drone we've wanted to make from the beginning; small enough to fit in your pocket but powerful enough to meet the rigorous demands of public safety, emergency response, and critical industrial missions."

Ascent's HELIUS features:

- Ultra-portable, ultra-light weight airframe
- 4G/LTE connectivity
- AI-enabled obstacle avoidance & object tracking
- 4K, 12.3MB Electro Optical, Ultra-low-light sensor with digital tilt, pan and zoom
- Field-swappable, rechargeable batteries
- Up to 45mph max speed
- 30+ min endurance

"We know that the future of aviation isn't about choosing between crewed and uncrewed systems—it's about teaming. Our acquisition of Ascent AeroSystems was a strategic move to lead that evolution, HELIUS is a key step in realizing that vision," said David Smith, CEO of Robinson Helicopter Company.

With an MSRP of \$4,499, HELIUS is available for pre-order now, with initial shipments expected to begin in Q4 2025. Customers can purchase directly from Ascent AeroSystems or through Robinson Helicopter Company dealers who are also authorized Ascent resellers.

"HELIUS expands our growing product line and sets a new benchmark for compact UAVs," Fuchs added. "For operators demanding durability, portability, and next-gen technology in a secure, American Made sub-250g platform, this is the solution."



*Drones World Contributing Editor  
Ms. Mary Jo Wagner in Conversation with*

**Mr. Ansgar Kadura**

*Co-founder and CEO - Wingcopter*

It's a good time to be in the Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) drone space. Estimated at USD 1.31 billion in 2025, the BVLOS drone market is expected to reach approximately USD 3.72 billion by 2030, according to recent research by Modor Intelligence. German drone manufacturer Wingcopter has built a successful BVLOS business over the last decade in the medical and commercial delivery sector and has now flown back to its foundational roots: long range surveying.

**Q Wingcopter has been successfully completing Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) missions in the medical supplies delivery space since 2017. What prompted the move to LiDAR BVLOS surveying solutions?**

**A** Wingcopter actually began with surveying projects in 2015, in the early stages of our company. So we already knew there would be strong interest in Wingcopter's vertical takeoff and landing and fixed-wing flight capabilities for surveying. An early key differentiator for us was in 2017 we maxed out the payload capacity to offer payloads up to 10 pounds while staying below the 55 pounds maximum takeoff weight and carry these heavy loads over long distances.

Then in 2019, we added another core differentiator—aviation grade certification—and became laser focused on becoming an aviation company and developing our aircraft with reliability and redundancies inside. We focused on flying heavy payloads over long ranges, and having good performance in strong winds—dependability that has been paramount for our medical deliveries as well.

In 2020 we began the FAA-type certification process, we continued to progress the reliability of our product, and now we've circled back to the surveying market with a very reliable drone that can vertically take off and land, has redundancies inside, and is built for flying beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS). GeoWeek seemed like

the perfect venue to demonstrate our re-engineered Wingcopter 198, which replaces the payload box for medical deliveries with a laser scanner. The re-engineered Wingcopter is an electric VTOL system that transitions into forward flight in mid-air. It can carry up to 10 lbs, flies at about 56 mph and has a distance range up to 37 miles (60 km).

One use case in particular that our customers showed significant interest in is using the drone for long-range LiDAR surveys over power lines, which are currently carried out by helicopters, predominantly. With our mobile van solution, users can launch the drone and control and monitor the flight from inside the van. So instead of flying over these long power lines with a helicopter, you can do the job with a safer and more cost-effective drone. Having a drone for BVLOS LiDAR surveys is an attractive alternative.

The response to this has been very positive. A lot of aviation operators are considering the idea of using drones as well.

**Q Are your LiDAR sensors from a third party?**

**A** Yes. Wingcopter is open for surveying applications and we have the payload capacity to carry high-spec laser scanners such as those from Riegl or YellowScan. We want to engage with real surveying companies and surveyors to ask, What is it that you need? The customers make the choice. They decide which laser scanner works best for them. We, as a drone provider, are supporting them with a new tool that they can utilize in a better way.

**Q One of the most common challenges for BVLOS**



**surveying is regulatory compliance. What is your approach to obtaining BVLOS waivers to ensure compliance with local aviation authorities' regulations? A waiver from the FAA, for example, is notoriously difficult to get.**

**A** Unlike in the medical supply delivery space where we are operating the Wingcopter, in the surveying sector, we are not the operator ourselves. We are an OEM. We're providing the drone solution for customers who operate the drone themselves. In the US, we have had customers who've secured a BVLOS FAA certificate—in 2022 the Wingcopter was used in Kansas for the longest ever BVLOS commercial delivery in the US.

The drone itself is prepared for BVLOS with a first person view (FPV) stream in the front of the drone and an LTE communication that is not bound to a certain distance but to the LTE network, and we have a backup satellite communication system. These are the typical requirements you need to get these kind of waivers. Also, we have an awareness platform on the drone. So we have the

remote ID, we have a digital signal processor (DSP) in for flight control and other advanced sensors to detect and avoid other aircrafts. It's well designed and positioned for securing BVLOS waivers.

**Q** **By expanding to the BVLOS surveying market, you're entering the domain of established drone services providers like Rocketmine, Alliance Engineering + Planning, and Applied Aeronautics that offer solutions for asset-heavy sectors such as energy and infrastructure. How does Wingcopter differ?**

**A** First of all, we are entering the LiDAR surveying market as an OEM. We are experts in developing drones and operating drones, but we are not experts in surveying. That is already an established market with many capable companies. Where we fit is helping build out the BVLOS segment of this market with drones, driving innovation and new market opportunities.

We also have operational experience so we can provide proper training on the system and

support customers with how to operate these drones and how to get BVLOS waivers.

If you look at drones in the current market in the sub 55-pound category, you're looking at a VTOL fixed-wing drone that has a certain range. Our drone can fly a conservative 39 miles in one mission. This is a range that we don't see on other players in the market, particularly combined with payload reliability. And this is what we hear from the market as well, so filling that needed gap is very interesting for them. We believe if you want to build a good drone, you also need to understand completely how it's being operated.

**Q** **The W198, the company's flagship product carries a 10-lb (4.5 kg) sensor payload that can capture up to 570 pts/m<sup>2</sup> at 5mm precision and can survey up to 37 miles (60 km) of linear infrastructure in one mission. Potential use cases include the inspection of power lines, pipelines, railways and roads, forest plantations, as well as the mapping of terrain and vegetation that is difficult to access such as narrow canyons. How will this technology be an advantage over the abundance of existing UAS capabilities?**

**A** I think the main advantage is it's more cost effective and safer. Helicopters are incredibly expensive and riskier for pilots, and multi-copter drones have limited range so that becomes more costly if you can only fly five miles per mission. With Wingcopter, you can use a BVLOS drone that can carry a high-spec LiDAR sensor and fly 37 miles per mission. That enables you to optimize your time and costs much more effectively. And you can do much bigger jobs in a shorter time. We're hearing that this is a game changer in the drone services



market.

**Q I've spoken with many surveyors who have had challenges with VLOS drones malfunctioning, losing communication, losing power and dropping out of the sky somewhere or falling on private property, in which case they don't have permission to enter and retrieve the drone. BVLOS surveying seems to heighten the risk of those issues, as well as others. Are you hearing a lot of talk about ensuring safety?**

**A** We not only hear the talk, we actively talk about it because this is what we have built the whole system around. We have a lot of intelligent people with a lot of capacities who have been working to solve exactly these challenges. If you imagine, if you want to deliver some urgently needed medicines or blood with a drone, it has to deliver. It can't just land somewhere off course or get lost. Ensuring the safety and dependability of the Wingcopter has been our core objective since launch. And that's why it's been designed and built with advanced sensors and systems to ensure it's "in site" remotely

through constant and reliable communication and it stays on course, even 37 miles away.

**Q You've had strong interest in Brazil for asset inspections and mapping. Have you launched any projects there or anywhere else?**

**A** Things are in development there. Similar to the US, Brazil has a huge issue with wildfires and power lines and trees falling onto power lines. So they are keen to have a solution that is cheaper than existing solutions to inspect assets over a large area.

As an example, if it's dry season and a critical time of year for fire risk, and you already have the Wingcopter and a laser scanner in a van in a certain area, you can quickly launch the drone and carry out a vegetation encroachment survey on your own. That eliminates the lengthy procurement process for securing a helicopter survey. This approach is more ad hoc surveying but it is an interesting shift in approach. Also laser scanners are very beneficial for vegetation penetration. With the significant forests in Brazil, this BVLOS approach is a natural for

forestry applications, environmental conservation, and these types of applications that can profit from more accurate data from LiDAR sensors.

As Wingcopter, we have this vision that we create efficient and sustainable drone solutions to improve and save lives everywhere. This corresponds directly with our medical delivery cases, and we're confident this mission will fly in the surveying market as well. If you fly over power lines for vegetation encroachment, for example, and you're able to identify areas at risk, remove the fuel and prevent a wildfire, this is a very noble cause in our opinion. Surveying in general can create great benefits for people.

**Q So you're in the feel good business?**

**A** More in the do good business.

**Q In addition to Brazil, are you having strong interest anywhere else?**

**A** Also in Japan. Brazil, Japan, and the United States are our initial focus areas, but we are open to the whole world.

**Q What are the next steps for Wingcopter? Are you also considering other sensor options like infrared or hyperspectral?**

**A** In general we are open to suggestions and requests, but we are particularly focused on certain niches where our drone adds a lot of value for people. So if we can substitute a helicopter that is currently doing a LiDAR survey with a safer, more precise and more cost efficient alternative, then we're adding a lot of value. Where we can add value is what's most important for us.



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## SECURING AMERICA'S SOUTHERN BORDER



Lockheed Martin has successfully integrated its AN/TPQ-53 multi-mission radar (MMR) with the Joint Task Force - Southern Border (JTF-SB) command and control systems in an operational environment, supporting U.S. Northern Command's (USNORTHCOM) southern border mission.

The AN/TPQ-53 MMR's open architecture design allows seamless integration with a variety of sensors and systems, providing a unified operational picture. This flexibility enables the system to quickly incorporate new capabilities and cutting-edge software, ensuring service members have the necessary tools to respond to emerging threats before they can adapt.

"The successful integration of the AN/TPQ-53 MMR in the southern border deployment showcases the power of collaboration between industry, government agencies such as the Department of Defense's Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office and end-users in addressing complex challenges," said Rick Cordaro, Lockheed Martin's vice president and general manager of Radar Sensors and Systems. "The AN/TPQ-53 MMR's proven performance and reliability have earned it a reputation as a trusted asset, and its open architecture design ensures it will remain a vital component of USNORTHCOM's mission to actively work with Customs and Border Protection to secure the southern border."

The USNORTHCOM southern border mission demands the capability to detect and track various threats, ranging from airborne to ground-based threats. The AN/TPQ-53 MMR is built to address this demand, offering agile and precise 360-degree scanning that can be deployed in under five minutes. The system identifies rapid threats, such as unmanned aerial systems, enabling service members to swiftly detect and respond with agility.

This integration with the JTF-SB follows recent demonstrations Northern Strike and Desert Guardian 1.0 highlighting AN/TPQ-53's ability to quickly adopt software updates and meet urgent national security priorities.

## ANDURIL AWARDED 10-YEAR \$642M PROGRAM OF RECORD TO DELIVER CUAS SYSTEMS FOR U.S. MARINE CORPS



Anduril has been awarded a \$642 million, 10-year Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Program of Record by the U.S. Marine Corps to deliver, install, and sustain Installation-Counter small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (I-CsUAS). Anduril's comprehensive I-CsUAS solution leverages the power of AI and advanced autonomy, equipping the U.S. Marine Corps with hardware and software capabilities required to address evolving aerial threats and protect installations worldwide over the next decade.

This program validates Anduril's CUAS advantage, enabling 24/7 autonomous operations powered by Lattice, Anduril's advanced software platform. Lattice uses AI to autonomously detect, track, identify, and neutralize aerial threats, empowering human operators to rapidly make critical decisions with minimal manpower.

Through a software-first approach, Anduril's integrated family of systems delivers comprehensive protection customized to the needs of each installation. Anduril's solution integrates multiple sensors and effectors into an easy-to-use, shared command and control (C2) interface and uses an open architecture to enable rapid iteration and system upgrades, providing the U.S. Marine Corps with the most advanced capabilities to outpace evolving threats over the 10 year period of performance.

This award expands our partnership with the U.S. Marine Corps, following a \$200 million contract awarded in November to develop and deliver a CUAS Engagement System for the Marine Air Defense Integrated System (MADIS). To meet the growing demand for its defense solutions, Anduril has invested in Arsenal-1, a first of its kind manufacturing facility that leverages software to manufacture autonomous systems at scale. Arsenal-1 will enable timely deployment of systems worldwide while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to future defense needs.

The scope of this program is a testament to the U.S. Marine Corps' commitment to leveraging the latest in advanced technology to protect its troops and strategic assets from the aerial threats defining modern conflicts. By leveraging autonomous capabilities, Anduril is turning an urgent requirement into an enduring, scalable solution.

## FIRST ARMY ADVANCES COUNTER-UAS TRAINING



Unmanned aerial system attacks are on the rise around the globe, and First Army has set its sights on the target – Soldier readiness. The 5th Armored Brigade continued to advance their counter-unmanned aerial systems program at mobilization force generation installation Fort Bliss during Illinois Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment, culminating training exercise Feb. 22-March 5, 2025. Col. Douglas F. Serie, commander of the 5th Armored Brigade, emphasized the brigade's commitment to enhancing C-UAS training for deploying units.

"The 5th AR Brigade continues to develop and provide comprehensive C-UAS training featuring dynamic threat scenarios, multiple training iterations, and live-fire exercises," he stated. "These pre-deployment exercises instill confidence in mobilized Soldiers, ensuring they are proficient in their systems, tactics, and procedures essential for combat readiness."

Soldiers with the 2-130th Infantry Regiment learned the foundation of Base Defense Operation Centers and the Mobile Low, Slow Unmanned Aircraft Integrated Defense System, or M-LIDS. This put their knowledge of systems and processes to the test during a mission readiness exercise, culminating in a week-long live-fire engagement to prepare crews for the assumption of the Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve force protection mission at their various outstations in Iraq and Syria in Spring 2025.

"We provide training for the M-LIDS, a dual vehicle solution that provides four different kinetic weapon systems, radar acquisition, and electromagnetic warfare capabilities, which allows Soldiers to perform air defense support," said Brandon C. Haines, M-LIDS Training and Operations Integrator, PM C-UAS (Astrion). "The drone acquisition comes in, crew cross-coordinates, and then they put fire on target. Training normally includes an academic portion, a hands-on portion, and ultimately, the live-fire exercise. They do emplacement drills, weapons acquisition, drone acquisition, and then put it all together to be one cohesive crew before they move into theater."

Observer controller/trainers with 3rd Battalion, 362nd Infantry Regiment relay theater-specific lessons learned best practices, successful counter-UAS integration techniques, and quick action drills to better equip 2-130th Inf. Regt.'s transition into the CJTF-OIR region.

"Through our rotations to theater, bringing back lessons learned from units that have come back from theater, and conducting after-action reviews with them, we understood that individual proficiency on C-UAS capabilities didn't help Soldiers understand how it came together when they worked as a crew," said Lt. Col. Jerome E. Hilliard, 3-362nd Inf. Regt. commander. "We went from computer-based training to more realistic, hands-on training so that force protection crews work collectively to understand how their piece of the pie comes together in C-UAS processes. We use live equipment, radars, C-UAS systems and drones swarming together, allowing crews to realize first-hand the impact of identifying the threat, mitigating those risks, or not identifying them and realizing the detrimental effect on the unit. We allow the rotational training unit to see and experience things that they may or may not experience downrange but in a controlled environment."

Upon notice of deployment orders, Soldiers with 2-130th Inf. Regt. worked with their partner OC/Ts of 1st Battalion, 335th Infantry Regiment, 157th Infantry Brigade, Division East, out of Camp Atterbury, Indiana, in preparation for their culminating training event at MFGI Fort Bliss.

"At Camp Atterbury, we provided classroom-based C-UAS training to help us understand the threat, capabilities, and technology," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Watkins, infantry maneuver OC/T with 1-335th Infantry Regiment. "What's beneficial about the training we're doing here is our ability to put into practice and build upon what we've learned this past year. We get to see not only what the drones can do but what they look like, how they operate, and how effective our equipment can be in real time because you can't get that in the classroom. We get to bridge the gap between doctrine and theater-specific counter-UAS operating procedures."

**First Army leverages the knowledge of diverse experts to provide a collective learning experience.** "We train on the latest in C-UAS capabilities, such as the Forward Area Air Defense Command and Control and Correlated Defense System of Systems Simulation hands-on training, allowing instructors to test the student's ability to recognize enemy and friendly assets and actively engage," said Haines. "We applied classroom instruction to theater-specific scenarios that replicate air attacks, emulating current enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures to allow for battle drill rehearsals and refinement of processes."

The 2-130th Inf. Regt. force protection crews participated in an M-LIDS live-fire exercise to instill confidence in kinetic systems' capability of shooting down UAS attacks.

## ALPINE EAGLE SECURES FUNDING FROM EUROPEAN BACKERS FOR COUNTER-DRONE TECH AMID RISING THREATS



The war in Ukraine has brought drones to the forefront of modern warfare, creating a surge in demand for counter-drone systems. However, legacy solutions to counter drones, such as ground-based defense systems and cyber warfare, often come with a hefty price tag. For German startup Alpine Eagle, these solutions fall short: When now-ubiquitous \$500 first-person-view (FPV) drones have the capacity to destroy multi-million-dollar tanks, cost-effective answers are needed.

"We use inexpensive, mass-producible systems to establish a symmetry against the numerical advantage of cheap strike drones," Dutch entrepreneur Jan-Hendrik Boelens told TechCrunch. Munich-based Alpine Eagle, which he co-founded in 2023, develops Sentinel, a mix of software and hardware focused on cost-efficiency.

Unlike ground-based competing solutions, such as Hover's counter-drone turret, Sentinel is airborne, with modular sensors that aren't hindered by terrain and other obstacles, while avoiding becoming a stationary target.

Its mothership, which is sophisticated but not meant to be expendable, carries kamikaze interceptors that also help it do more than detecting threats or jamming them: They can either capture objects with nets or destroy hostile drones altogether.

While potential applications exist in law enforcement and other sectors, the current geopolitical climate has driven demand for this technology, primarily in the military. The Munich-based startup secured the German army as its launch customer, in addition to other government agencies, and said it achieved seven-digit revenue in the first 12 months of operation.

This helped it close a €10.25 million (around \$10.96 million) seed round led by British deep tech VC firm IQ Capital. The new funding will help the startup expand its current team of machine learning practitioners and aeronautical engineers, with new hires across product, engineering, business development, and sales bringing its headcount to 40.

## FROM CONCEPT TO IMPACT - SAAB AND THE SWEDISH AIR FORCE DEPLOY "LOKE"



Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems (C-UAS) solutions have become increasingly important to military forces due to the rapidly evolving air threat landscape. The proliferation of drone technology has fundamentally changed the battlefield and continues to do so at a rapid pace.

Commercial drones have created a cost-benefit paradox - while traditional air defence systems can neutralise these threats, using expensive military assets against low-cost consumer technology is a unsustainable economic equation. They fly low with minimal signatures, operate in swarms and are autonomous, evading standard detection methods. Conventional air defence systems target traditional aircraft and missiles, not small, slow, unmanned systems. This capability gap requires urgent attention. C-UAS solutions must evolve rapidly to keep pace with evolving drone technology and maintain effective defence capabilities.

**UAS countermeasure development timeline :** As an experiment, the new C-UAS system development was also tested as a speed run. What began as a defence industry demonstration turned into an intense three-month sprint to deliver a mobile, adaptable system to the Swedish Air Force's combat units. This would normally take a longer time, but this remarkable feat of engineering and collaboration was achieved in just 84 days.

The modular and mobile concept covers the entire kill chain. This comprehensive system includes world-class radars such as the proven Giraffe 1X for detection and classification, and lightweight command and control based on the SHORAD concept. Effectors such as the Trackfire remote weapon station, commonly found on naval vessels such as the Combat Boat 90, complete the solution. This innovative approach delivers cutting-edge technology that is both comprehensive and flexible, providing a decisive advantage in the face of any airborne challenge.

## D-FEND SOLUTIONS ACCELERATES GLOBAL EXPANSION WITH NEW U.K. ENTITY AND LONDON OFFICE AND GROWING U.K. TEAM

D-Fend Solutions, the leader in field-proven radio frequency (RF) cyber-based, non-kinetic counter-drone takeover technology announced the expansion of its global operations with the launch of a new U.K. entity, D-Fend Solutions AD U.K. Ltd., and the opening of a new office in London. This strategic move underscores the company's commitment to serving the UK's growing need for advanced counter-drone solutions across critical sectors, including defence, homeland security, law enforcement, and aviation.

Situated at Upper Woburn Place in London's prestigious Euston neighbourhood, the new office provides D-Fend's team with a prime location for business operations, networking, and collaboration. The area is a hub for major corporations and institutions, with excellent transport links via Euston Station and proximity to Russell Square, making it an ideal meeting ground for governmental and enterprise customers and partners.

As part of its expansion, D-Fend Solutions has rounded out its U.K. team with key leadership positions. The team is headed by Managing Director Martin Broomhead, a British Army Air Corps veteran pilot who brings his extensive corporate aerospace and defence industry experience from Boeing, Thales, and QinetiQ to the business. Mark Rutherford, Sales Director, engages with D-Fend's aviation, infrastructure, and governmental customers to expand the company's market presence. Simon Foreman, a former Royal Navy Commander and Senior Weapon Engineer Officer with extensive experience in the MOD and defence firm Babcock, leads the Pre-Sales efforts and supports customer evaluations and demonstrations. Recent hire Myles Gabriel brings extensive avionics technician experience to ensure successful implementations, training, and excellent customer support.



Zohar Halachmi, Chairman and CEO of D-Fend Solutions, commented, "The establishment of our U.K. entity and new London office marks another milestone in D-Fend's global growth. The U.K. is at the forefront of adopting innovative counter-drone technologies, and this move allows us to better serve our existing customers while also addressing new opportunities in this critical market. Our EnforceAir technology has proven its effectiveness here in complex environments, and we're excited to bring this expanded presence to our U.K. users and partners, enhancing their capabilities to address evolving drone threats across various sectors."

"D-Fend Solutions has already established an exceptionally strong installed base at major U.K. international airports, national, metropolitan, and local police forces, and multiple domain defence and homeland security organizations, working closely with strategic stakeholders," said Martin Broomhead, "the launch of our new U.K. entity and London office solidifies our commitment to the U.K. market, ensuring we can provide even more localised support and expertise. We are now better positioned than ever to meet the rapidly evolving drone related security challenges across the U.K. I look forward to further expanding our activities and deepening our governmental and corporate partnerships to enhance U.K. airspace security."



# Epirus Closes \$250M Series D to Hyperscale Leonidas Production Capability for Critical Asset Protection

Epirus announced an oversubscribed \$250 million Series D fundraising round, bringing the company's total venture funding to more than \$550 million and positioning the company to scale production of its Leonidas™ product line to meet growing global demand.

Leonidas™ is a scalable solid-state, high-energy, high-power microwave (HPM) technology for counter-electronics applications that has been proven effective in Department of Defense testing in countering drones, drone swarms, and other electronics. This investment will enable Epirus to grow and acquire the best talent, improve supply chain resiliency, upgrade internal systems and processes, expand into international and commercial markets, and increase the company's innovation and manufacturing footprint in the U.S.

The round was led by 8VC and Washington Harbour Partners LP, alongside a deep roster of return investors including StepStone Group, funds and accounts advised by T. Rowe Price Investment Management, Inc., Gaingels, and strategic defense partner General Dynamics Land Systems, and new investors including Oppenheimer's Private Market Opportunities Vista VI Fund, NightDragon, Manhattan Venture Partners, Centaurus Capital LP, Center15 Capital and Protagonist.

"Our directed EMP is already the best protection against drone swarms today," said Joe Lonsdale, Epirus Founder and Managing Partner, 8VC. "With our capital and talent and the right partnerships with U.S. Department of Defense to continue to advance Epirus' technology, it will quickly become critical for defending aircraft, ships and even satellites and space-based platforms—and determinative for the future of warfare."

"The future of warfare demands defense technologies that are intelligent, agile, scalable, and cost-effective," said Mina Faltas, Founder and Chief Investment Officer at Washington Harbour Partners. "Epirus is delivering exactly that as the transformative leader in counter-electronics technology, delivering the only field-deployable solution capable of



neutralizing drone swarms at scale. As the U.S. faces mounting threats and a strained defense industrial base, Epirus provides a unique asymmetric advantage to fill a critical gap in our national security. We are honored to partner with Epirus as they pioneer the next generation of directed energy capabilities, redefining how we protect our warfighters, civilians, and critical infrastructure."

"GDLS is excited to continue our strategic partnership with Epirus and the promise of high-power microwave technology solutions used to address counter-UAS threats for military application," said Dave Paddock, President, General Dynamics Land Systems.

**A New Era of Warfare Requires a '1 to Many' Mindset**

"A new era of threats mandates a shift from a '1 to 1' mindset to a '1 to many' way of thinking for short-range air defense, and we are primed to support the Department of Defense in this new way of warfare," said Andy Lowery, Epirus CEO. "This funding will supercharge the manufacturing capability for our Leonidas™ high-power microwave product line and position us for our next stage of scaling growth."

Today's battlefields are littered with thousands of low-cost, highly networked and highly distributed threats, capable of

overwhelming traditional defenses through sheer volume and agility. This shift in warfare necessitates technologies that are scalable and easily upgraded to fit a range of use cases, effective against a spectrum of threats, and capable of processing many threats simultaneously by a single operator. That's why Epirus built Leonidas™—a solid-state, software-defined, high-energy HPM system that delivers unmatched electronic warfare capabilities. Tested and proven as a scalable counter-swarm solution, Leonidas™ features an open architecture, unlimited magazine, and demonstrated non-kinetic effects against a wide range of electronic threats.

"It's not just the effector that must operate with a "1 to many" mindset—the entire kill chain, from sensors to command and control, must do the same," said Lowery. "We've worked alongside the Defense Department to drive this approach and will continue to support its evolution as the threat landscape evolves."

With this funding, Epirus will realize its 2018 founding vision of building next-generation short-range air defense systems at scale and advance our mission of overcoming the asymmetric challenges inherent to the future of national security.

## Casia G Now Detects Aircraft at Night, Enabling 24/7 BVLOS Operations



**U**Avionix, a leading provider of aviation technology for uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) announced the launch of Casia G Release 4.0, a software update that enables nighttime detection of aircraft and expands Casia G's capabilities to support 24/7 Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) UAS operations. With the software enhancement, Casia G unlocks BVLOS operations up to 400 feet at night. Casia G's nighttime capability has already received an approval from the FAA for Fort Wayne Police Department, IN.

"The ability to safely operate our drones beyond visual line of sight—day and night—significantly improves our ability to respond to emergencies, conduct search and rescue missions, and enhance public safety," Officer Matt Rowland of Fort Wayne Police Department Air Support Unit.

Casia G is the first ground-based detect-and-avoid (DAA) system to offer both cooperative and non-cooperative aircraft detection 24/7, supporting safer, more efficient UAS operations. The new software upgrade requires no hardware modifications, making it an effortless enhancement for existing users.

"With Software Release 4.0, operators can detect aircraft, including small planes and helicopters, up to 16.7 kilometers away at night, significantly expanding operational flexibility and safety for operations," said Jason Hardy-Smith, VP of Products at uAvionix. "This is crucial for many UAS operations, but especially Drone as a First Responder (DFR) programs and Search & Rescue as unfortunately, bad things often happen after dark."

### Key advancements in Casia G Release 4.0:

**Nighttime Detection:** Detects both cooperative and non-cooperative aircraft at distances up to 16.7 km (10.4 miles), providing 360-degree airspace awareness for nighttime BVLOS operations.

**Accuracy and Coverage:** For operations using multiple Casia G units, triangulation technology provides precise information about the range, altitude, and GPS coordinates of intruding aircraft.

**Regulatory Approval:** The Fort Wayne Police Department is the first department to receive approval to use Casia G for nighttime BVLOS operations without visual observers, up to 400 feet.

The advancements in Release 4.0 are the result of rigorous performance testing. Multiple FAA approvals for BVLOS operations are pending and expected to conclude shortly, supporting the operational capabilities of law enforcement and commercial entities alike.

"With Casia G's nighttime detection, our department can deploy UAVs with confidence, knowing we have continuous airspace awareness and compliance with FAA regulations." - Officer Michael Hickman of Fort Wayne Police Department Air Support Unit.

uAvionix is committed to innovation and advancing the integration of UAS into the National Airspace, ensuring that the skies remain safe for all users, day and night.

## Diehl Defence exhibits new protection system Sky Sphere at Enforce Tac



**D**iehl Defence is exhibited its Sky Sphere drone defence system at this year's Enforce Tac trade fair, which took place in Nuremberg. The focus will be on the new eMissile CICADA, which is designed to defend against threats from class 1 and 2 drones and which is being presented under this name for the first time in Europe.

CICADA is an electrically driven missile that is supposed to be deployed in two versions with different payloads. In a non-lethal version, drones are to be neutralized by a catch net; in a lethal version, a fragmentation warhead is integrated as an effector.

The effector CICADA is part of the overall system Sky Sphere which covers the entire sensor to shooter chain. Due to the modular set-up, Sky Sphere can be completed customer-specifically either with company own components or with components from partner companies.

Diehl Defence is currently in discussions with potential customers for initial customer-specific integration projects and plans to have the system available on the market from 2026.

A model of CICADA is displayed on the Diehl Defence booth at Enforce Tac and will, in addition, be presented to industry experts on the "Enforce Tac TV" channel provided by the trade fair organizer.

Diehl Defence, a leading system house for ground-based air defence, guided missiles, ammunition and protection systems has been exhibiting at Enforce Tac for several years to a steadily growing extent. Besides Sky Sphere, a large number of ammunition products and protection systems will be on display at the Diehl Defence booth this year, among them the Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV) "Ziesel". Another "Ziesel" will be demonstrated in its logistic version on the trade fair training ground, the "Enforce Tac Village". Furthermore, a "Ziesel" UGV is exhibited in a MedEvac version on the Meier Medizintechnik booth, Diehl Defence's partner in this field.

## Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. and Elbit Systems Ltd. have been awarded a contract to supply a cutting-edge Naval Decoy Control & Launching System (DCLS) to protect the new Frigates of NATO European countries

The contract, set to be executed over a period of four years, includes the delivery of systems for 5 vessels. The agreement is part of a joint program between RAFAEL and Elbit, and will provide an integrated solution from both companies, featuring Elbit's state-of-the-art operational DESEAVER MK-4 Stabilized and Trainable DCLS, along with a range of RAFAEL's high-end decoy countermeasures.

RAFAEL's passive and active decoy countermeasures were designed to effectively neutralize threats such as advanced Anti-Ship Missile (ASM) seekers. RAFAEL's family of passive RF and IR decoy countermeasures, such as BEAM TRAP, SMOKE TRAP and WIZARD has undergone a significant recent upgrade with the addition of the C-GEM active decoy, developed specifically to counter the most threatening adversary ASMs.

Elbit's DESEAVER MK-4 Countermeasure Dispensing System (CMDS) is an advanced maritime Electronic Warfare (EW) solution designed to effectively counter complex missile attack scenarios. The system is part of Elbit's advanced integrated EW suite, which enables high situational awareness in the maritime arena and the



ability to counter various threats. The combination of the suite's ECM capabilities with the launcher's decoy system enhances the ship's defense capabilities against different threats.

The integrated system fires various types of decoy rounds from multiple launchers to counter simultaneous threats, positioning it as the fourth generation of naval EW dispensing systems that enhance soft-kill anti-missile defense capabilities. The system consists of trainable and stabilized launchers, capable of rapidly and accurately deploying decoys selected by anti-missile algorithms. It supports the launch of both passive and active decoys and is fully integrated with other ship combat systems. The solution enables the transition from legacy fixed Decoy Launching Systems to the DESEAVER MK-4 an operational trainable and stabilized DCLS, combining both passive and

active decoy countermeasures. This will significantly enhance the vessel's survivability in modern combat scenarios.

Tzvi Marmor, EVP and General Manager of RAFAEL's Land and Naval Systems Division: «We are proud to lead this partnership and are honored by the trust that has been placed in us by awarding us this significant contract. We are committed to delivering cutting-edge, combat-proven electronic warfare solutions that enhance naval operational capabilities. With decades of operational experience and a deep understanding of the evolving threats in the maritime domain, RAFAEL is dedicated to providing reliable and innovative EW systems that ensure mission success and safeguard our allies at sea.»

Oren Sabag, General Manager of Elbit Systems ISTAR & EW: «This award adds to the many contracts we have secured in recent years for EW self-protection solutions across the naval and air domains, highlighting our advanced and proven technologies. The modern battlefield demands innovative and effective EW self-protection solutions, and we are proud to deliver these advanced systems that enhance the effectiveness and self-protection of forces.»

## Weibel Scientific and DefSecIntel Solutions Forge Strategic Partnership to Strengthen European Defense Capabilities

In an era where security challenges demand cutting-edge solutions, Weibel Scientific (Denmark) and DefSecIntel Solutions (Estonia) are proud to announce a strategic collaboration that will enhance European air defense, counter-UAS capabilities, and surveillance technologies.

The agreement, signed at Weibel's headquarters in Allerød, was witnessed by H.E. Andre Pung, Estonia's Ambassador to Denmark, underlining the strong Danish-Estonian defense cooperation and the shared commitment to European security and technological sovereignty.

By integrating Weibel's world-leading radar systems with DefSecIntel's advanced C2, surveillance and C-UAS platforms such as EIRSHIELD with interceptor solutions, this partnership is set to deliver state-of-the-art defense systems that address critical security needs and capability shortfalls across Ukraine, the European Union, and NATO-aligned initiatives such as Eastern Shield and Baltic Drone Wall.

«Weibel Scientific has long been at the forefront of radar innovation, and this partnership



allows us to extend our expertise into a fully integrated defense ecosystem. By working with DefSecIntel, we can create scalable and highly effective solutions for both European and global defense challenges.» – Peter Röpke, CEO, Weibel Scientific

Estonia, a recognized leader in defense innovation, has been a driving force behind the Eastern Shield Drone Wall initiative, a pan-European defense effort aimed at securing the region against emerging threats. The collaboration between Weibel and DefSecIntel ensures that European technology remains sovereign, advanced, and operationally superior.

«This partnership is about more than technology—it is about ensuring that European defense solutions remain independent, innovative, and built to meet real operational needs. We need European solutions, as air defence and C-UAS have been critical capability gaps. We require not only innovative solutions but also production capabilities in Europe to counter various threats, including hostile drone attacks. Together, we are setting new standards for integrated air defense and counter-drone solutions, like our system EIRSHIELD Dome.» – Jaanus Tamm, CEO, DefSecIntel Solutions

## LATVIAN COMPANIES RAPIDLY DEVELOPING ANTI-DRONE CAPABILITIES



Continuing the targeted strengthening of national competencies and the capabilities of the National Armed Forces in countering unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Ministry of Defense has signed three research and development contracts with Origin Robotics, SAF Tehnika, and Frankenburg Technologies reports Labs of Latvia.

The total investment in these projects could reach €10 million, comprised of funding from the Ministry of Defense and additional resources secured by the aforementioned companies. Given the contracts' built-in potential for third-party integration, the total investment volume may increase over the course of the projects.

According to Minister of Defense Andris Sprūds, the primary goals of these agreements are to enhance the National Armed Forces' short-range air defence capabilities, expand the EU and national anti-drone technology sector with solutions independent of third-country suppliers, and increase strategic investments in military research and development.

**Funding and investment model:** The projects will follow a co-financing model, with both the Ministry of Defense and private companies contributing. The typical investment ratio in such projects is approximately 65% from the defence sector and 35% from industry partners. However, this proportion may change as additional partners or new project requirements arise, potentially reducing the defence sector's share. The focal points for the first three anti-drone research and development projects are: automated drone interceptors, electronic warfare-based solutions and guided missile systems. According to Normunds Bergs, Chairman of the Board at SAF Tehnika, the company will officially begin developing electronic counter-drone systems. "It is a great honour and source of pride that the Latvian Ministry of Defense recognises our expertise in developing and manufacturing these systems. The geopolitical situation makes it clear that our security and defense are in our own hands, and we must act swiftly," Agris Ķipurs, co-founder of Origin, highlights the fact that emerging airborne threats require new and improved interception systems.

"We are now facing threats that were unknown just a few years ago. This is a very real challenge, and we need better weapons and interception systems to counteract them. Our mission is to develop such solutions and provide them to our armed forces."

In 2024, Origin Robotics received a €4.5 million grant from the European Defence Fund to develop target acquisition technologies for precision-guided munitions. In addition, the company secured €4 million in pre-seed funding to accelerate product development and expand its engineering and sales teams.

**New anti-drone products in development:** Frankenburg Technologies is developing guided missiles designed to neutralise various types of airborne drones.

"This is an entirely new and unprecedented product in the Baltic region. No one has previously built missiles here. The path is complex and long, but we are grateful to the Ministry of Defense for the opportunity to develop these capabilities. Once we succeed, Latvia will join the small group of nations capable of designing and manufacturing their own guided missiles," said Andrejs Puķītis, CTO of Frankenburg Technologies.

Another automated anti-drone project is in the final negotiation phase, focusing on adapting existing weapon systems for counter-drone operations in the National Armed Forces. It is expected that this project will be executed in partnership with WeMPS.

In the opinion of Kristians Rimkus, CEO of WeMPS, traditional air defence systems are often too costly for shooting down low-cost drones. His company is developing a kinetic counter-drone system that integrates computer vision with machine gun-based interception:

"We aim to create an efficient and affordable system that avoids wasting expensive air defence missiles on cheap drones."

## Thales-led consortium EISNET to boost European air defence



Officially launched on the 1st December 2024, the EISNET consortium met at the end of January 2025 in the presence of 65 high-level representatives from European industry, research centres, universities, the European Commission and Member States. The project will establish a set of common standards, as well as create prototypes and develop demonstration scenarios.

EISNET will define, develop and demonstrate next-generation real-time networks protocols – called the EISNET Architecture Framework Tool (EAFT) – that will allow European radars, passive sensors, and command & control systems from different suppliers and countries to communicate in real-time and exchange data and services between systems dynamically. EISNET's smart dynamic management will enhance the performance, scalability, responsiveness and resilience of new and legacy IAMD systems for the most challenging air and missile threat scenarios.

By integrating these various capabilities in a coordinated manner and enhancing communication speed, the project aims to reduce the command chain latency in the face of new-generation threats, high velocity attacks, massive fire saturation, and the stealth of these threats. EISNET's ambition is to move towards an open standard to enable full interoperability with all IAMD suppliers.

Raphaël Desi, Vice-President Integrated Airspace-protection Systems, Thales said: "Air superiority is decisive in today's warfare in order to protect our countries and citizens. EISNET paves the way for a new generation of Integrated Air Missile Defence. Together, in this Thales-led consortium, we will boost European air defence".

# BlueHalo Conducts Successful Test Launch of FE-1 Next-Gen C-UAS Missile

**B**lueHalo, the company transforming the future of global defense with actively deployed and operationally proven Counter-Uncrewed Aerial System (C-UAS) solutions, announced the successful live fire demonstration of its Next-Generation C-UAS Missile (NGCM)-Freedom Eagle-1 (FE-1), addressing the critical need for munitions industrial base expansion to meet the rapidly evolving advanced aerial threats.

"In light of recent global events, including activities in Europe, the Red Sea and Taiwan, we're taking a proactive stance-increasing internal investments to advance our FE-1 system and leaning in to meet the demand signal on an expedited timeline," said Jonathan MoneyMaker, BlueHalo Chief Executive Officer. "Our investments and development progress, including this successful CTV test launch, underscore BlueHalo's dedication to addressing evolving threats and ensuring that warfighters have access to critical capabilities sooner rather than later."

During the first Controlled Test Vehicle (CTV) live fire demonstration held in January at Yuma Proving Ground, Team BlueHalo conducted three missile test flights. In each of the three tests, FE-1 launched successfully and performed its flight as planned, affirming BlueHalo's commitment to a rapid development schedule. The team collected video, system and sensor data logs, radar tracks, and RF diagnostics data from each flight test to evaluate the missile's guidance, navigation, and control systems and analyze aerodynamic models to drive down significant

technical risk associated with the program.

"Going three for three on the first ever launch during the development of a new kinetic missile program is an astounding engineering feat and a testament to our team's incredible dedication and expertise," said James Batt, BlueHalo Chief Growth Officer. "FE-1 is a superior solution to address critical gaps in our nation's C-UAS and air defense arsenal. We are thrilled to get it one step closer to the frontlines, where it will protect our warfighters and ensure mission success."

The recent demonstration is the latest in a string of FE-1 milestones, highlighting its rapid development timeline:

Last June, BlueHalo announced its selection as one of two vendors chosen to continue development of the NGCM by the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Aviation & Missile Center (CCDC AvMC) Aviation & Missile Technology Consortium® (AMTC).

In August, the company announced the completion of multiple rounds of testing for the FE-1, including the successful firing of its dual-thrust, solid rocket motor.

In December, BlueHalo successfully completed warhead detonation testing, which collected impact data against simulated targets. Test data included penetration depths, velocities, impacts, and panel frag patterns, which will be used to confirm FE-1's lethality predictions and support continued warhead development.

"While competitors in the NGCM program remain

focused on conceptual presentations, BlueHalo is actively building and testing flight hardware," said Batt. "Team BlueHalo went from paper design to first flight in 107 days, demonstrating incredible innovation and a commitment to the NGCM program. This success not only indicates our readiness but also significantly reduces the technical and schedule risks associated with the NGCM program."

BlueHalo's continued investment and acceleration in the development of FE-1-with a planned customer live-fire demonstration in 3Q 2025-is in response to legislative affirmation to this capability is a priority of growing importance. In the recently passed FY25 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), FE-1 is a critical response to the evolving UAS threat landscape. Supported by Congressional oversight, significant budgetary allocations, and the recognition of current system limitations, it addresses the need for enhanced range, lethality, and adaptability. This missile ensures a layered, cost-effective defense strategy, protecting national security interests against increasingly sophisticated drone threats.

"It's clear that the new administration wants middle-tier acquisition going faster and fielding technology quicker," said MoneyMaker. "Additionally, Congress is supportive of additional effectors to get longer range, at higher altitudes, against a threat that is evolving faster than we can keep pace with current systems. We're moving at the speed necessary to meet the need, even if it requires our own internal funding to make it happen."

## ELTA North America Contract to Provide U.S. Department of Defense with Groundbreaking Vehicle Protection Multi-Mission/Multi-Sensor Suite (M3S2)

**E**LTA North America, a United States company headquartered in Maryland, is a defense industry leader in Air and Ground Based Integrated Sensors. Designed to support Combat Vehicle Protection Systems, ELTA North America is proud to announce a U.S. Department of Defense contract to evaluate the cutting-edge M3S2 (Multi-Mission/Multi-Sensor Suite).

The M3S2 is a revolutionary, multi-mission sensor system designed to provide simultaneous Active Protection, Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS), and advanced ground surveillance capabilities. By integrating radar and electro-optical sensing into a single, low Size, Weight, and Power (SWaP) package, M3S2 delivers unmatched situational awareness and defensive



capabilities for tactical vehicles and other critical assets.

"As modern threats evolve, so must our defensive solutions," said Joe Adams, CEO of ELTA North America. "The M3S2 provides 360-degree tactical vehicle protection, seamlessly combining advanced sensors to counter a wide range of threats while reducing the need for multiple, standalone systems."

This milestone order underscores the Department of Defense's commitment to leveraging next-generation technologies to enhance battlefield survivability and operational effectiveness. ELTA North America remains at the forefront of sensor innovation, delivering mission-critical solutions to the U.S. military and allied forces worldwide.

## Archer And Palantir To Build The AI Foundation For The Future Of Next-Gen Aviation Technologies



**A**rcher Aviation Inc. and Palantir Technologies Inc. announced a partnership to build the AI foundation for the future of next-gen aviation technologies. For decades, the aviation industry has made only incremental improvements, constrained by legacy technology and a dominant duopoly in commercial aviation. With the rapid acceleration of AI, as well as breakthroughs in distributed electric propulsion, the industry is now poised for change.

The two plan to leverage Palantir Foundry and AIP to accelerate the scaling of Archer's aircraft manufacturing capabilities at its facilities in Georgia and Silicon Valley, with the intent to advance the development of software solutions to drive innovation across the entire value chain.

This would include the development of next-gen software utilizing AI to improve a range of aviation systems, including air traffic control, movement control and route planning, with the goal of improving efficiency, safety and affordability across the industry.

Archer and Palantir will formalize this partnership later today during a signing ceremony between Palantir co-founder and CEO, Alex Karp, and Archer founder and CEO, Adam Goldstein, at Palantir's AIPCon.

"Palantir's partnership with Archer is redefining the future of flight, making it not only more efficient but also more accessible," said Alex Karp. "By integrating Palantir's advanced AI capabilities with Archer's innovative approach to aircraft manufacturing and operations, we are setting the stage for a transformative leap in efficiency, safety and sustainability."

Adam Goldstein said, "While the aviation industry has an unmatched level of safety, much of the legacy technology supporting the industry has only incrementally advanced. AI and software present an inflection point that will shape the future of aviation. We're proud to be partnering with Dr. Karp and the entire Palantir team to build the AI backbone for the next-generation of aviation."

## EVE AIR MOBILITY AND UI HELICOPTER COLLABORATE TO ACCELERATE ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY IN SOUTH KOREA



**E**ve Air Mobility a company dedicated to fostering Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) globally, and UI Helicopter, South Korea's leading helicopter operator and maintenance provider, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cultivate the industry's ecosystem in South Korea.

Through their combined expertise, Eve and UI Helicopter will collaborate to introduce eVTOL technical, operational and ecosystem requirements to the local government and industry in South Korea.

"Advanced air mobility has the potential to reinvent global mobility, particularly in the dense urban areas that need it most," explained Johann Bordais, CEO of Eve. "We're proud to share Eve's resources in technical and ecosystem development with UI Helicopter to develop a technically rigorous AAM infrastructure."

"South Korea has been a pioneer in laying the groundwork for Urban Air Mobility - establishing a sustainable infrastructure for the industry to flourish is a vital next step," said UI Helicopter CEO Sungwieh Albert Rim. "With the right technical partner and UI Helicopter's longstanding relationship with South Korean policymakers, we look forward to unlocking the AAM use cases that most benefit us."

The collaboration will begin by fielding Eve's Urban Air Mobility (UAM) market survey to gather initial intelligence supporting this process. The South Korean government has taken significant steps to advance Urban Air Mobility through various initiatives, including the K-UAM Grand Challenge. In addition to Seoul, there exists considerable potential for AAM in rural regions of South Korea, serving as a vital means of enhancing connectivity and stimulating local economies.

Leveraging Eve's knowledge, UI will harness its local expertise to ensure collaboration and open dialogue with policy leaders as the two parties develop an AAM ecosystem that rigorously incorporates technical best practices and South Korea's distinct regulatory standards.

## SUPERNAL, CHC HELICOPTER AND HELI-ONE COLLABORATE TO DEVELOP ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY NETWORKS



Supernal LLC - Hyundai Motor Group's (HMG's) Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) company announced an agreement with CHC Helicopter, the global helicopter flight services company specializing in offshore transportation and search and rescue operations, and CHC subsidiary Heli-One, a leading global provider of rotor-wing maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services, to scale shared electric vertical and take-off landing (eVTOL) vehicle operations.

The companies will establish a collaborative framework to develop and scale AAM networks, integrating Supernal's vehicles, CHC's flight operations services and Heli-One's MRO products and services. Specifically, the objective is to understand how CHC could operate Supernal's eVTOL vehicles in the future for AAM commercial passenger transportation, as well as for potential applications with its existing flight services client base in offshore energy, search-and-rescue, and emergency medical services. The three companies will also explore how Heli-One could provide a range of potential eVTOL MRO services for CHC internally and other operators of Supernal's eVTOL vehicles globally.

"Supernal is pleased to partner with CHC, one of the world's largest rotorcraft operators, and Heli-One, a leading global provider of rotorcraft MRO services, as we work to commercialize eVTOL vehicles," said Jaiwon Shin, president of Hyundai Motor Group and CEO of Supernal. "The collaboration will ensure Supernal is the OEM of choice for future eVTOL operators."

"In partnering with CHC and Heli-One, we are confident we will devise new ways to meet customer needs through Advanced Air Mobility," said David Rottblatt, senior director of strategy and commercialization, Supernal. "Matching CHC's global experience and Heli-One's support services with Supernal's scaled eVTOL vehicle manufacturing will expand seamless operations as the industry matures."

Supernal plans to deliver its first eVTOL vehicles to operators in 2028, which will cruise at 120 miles per hour with an initial range of 60 miles. CHC offers local expertise across a global network with a focus on safety, reliability and sustainability. The company's strong history helps it deliver unmatched services across a range of sectors.

"We are excited to support Supernal's visionary approach to Advanced Air Mobility and commitment to vertical flight with CHC's 75 years of global vertical lift operations and sustainment excellence," said Tom Burke, president and CEO, CHC. "The companies' collective vision is to be the global leader in vertical aviation by delivering safe, reliable, efficient and sustainable services to support our customers' journey and success."

Heli-One is a leading provider of helicopter in-service support services with certifications and expertise in a broad range of airframes and components from major helicopter and engine manufacturers. Heli-One is positioned to provide MRO services to Supernal vehicles in markets where the eVTOL OEM does not initially open facilities.

"We are proud to partner with Supernal on its innovative work developing the future of air travel," said Miguel Carrasco, president, Heli-One. "Heli-One, CHC and Supernal are well suited due to our shared commitment to safety and exceptional performance."

The three companies are actively working to identify geographies, use cases, routes and networks for deployment, as well as partnership models for future market development.

## Ascendance Chooses Safran to Propel its ATEA VTOL



Ascendance just announced it has selected ENGINEUS, the first EASA-certified electric motor, developed by Safran Electrical & Power, for the prototype flying ATEA, its hybrid-electric vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft.

ATEA, which features an innovative propulsion architecture consisting of eight vertical electric motors and two horizontal electric motors, is a silent low-carbon alternative to conventional helicopters, designed to reduce environmental impact and pave the way for more efficient regional connections.

The flying ATEA demonstrator, currently in production, will be equipped with two ENGINEUS electric motors built by Safran Electrical & Power, providing horizontal propulsion and each developing in excess of 100KW. With its power and control electronics integrated directly into the motor and its optimized air cooling system, ENGINEUS meets ATEA's requirements.

Ascendance began its ground testing campaign at its representative aircraft test facilities, in Muret, south of Toulouse, France. The purpose of these tests is to approve the integration of new technologies, including ENGINEUS, into ATEA's hybrid electric propulsion system, and validate their performance.

"Safety is central to our program, particularly the first of our test flights to be conducted with a pilot on board. This collaboration with Safran Electrical & Power, a leading industry player, is an opportunity for us to benefit from their expertise in performance and safety, as well as the performance of the ENGINEUS motors", says Jean-Christophe Lambert, Ascendance's CEO.

"We are very proud to support Ascendance with their ambitious VTOL ATEA program. This announcement, which comes after the EASA certification of our ENGINEUS motor, consolidates our position as a pioneer in the field of electric propulsion. It is the result of several months of technical collaboration between our two companies in the Occitanie French region", said Agnès Pronost-Gilles, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Power Division, Safran Electrical & Power.

The ATEA project was selected in 2023 within the framework of the France 2030 recovery plan, as part of the "Produce a low-carbon aircraft in France" program. As such, Ascendance relies on a number of French players for the aircraft's key systems.

## AIR TAXIS POISED FOR MASS ADOPTION AS HONEYWELL SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS CONSUMER INTEREST



**H**oneywell released new survey results showing nearly all U.S. airline fliers (98%) would consider taking an electric vertical take-off and landing vehicle, or eVTOL, as part of their travel journey. Commonly referred to as air taxis, these piloted advanced air mobility (AAM) aircraft are poised to enter passenger service in select overseas locations and then will take flight in the U.S. The survey of 1,000 U.S. adult fliers also found that almost 8 out of 10 respondents would travel more often if they could take an air taxi to the airport (79%).

Across travelers, Honeywell researchers determined that the possibility of reducing overall travel time was the biggest factor in their interest. Air taxis are seen as a much faster way to transition to and from busy airports or between nearby cities, with almost half of respondents citing “not having to sit in traffic” as a key motivator (47%). Other factors include ease of use and convenience (61%), cost (61%), minimal environmental impact (44%) and the fun factor – with “novelty/curiosity” cited by 44% of fliers.

“Anyone who travels regularly knows that the journey to and from the airport often adds unwelcome time, cost and hassle to the overall trip,” said Dave Shilliday, vice president and general manager of Advanced Air Mobility at Honeywell Aerospace Technologies. “Air taxis can offer a safe, fast and innovative alternative to traditional transport methods. Our research indicates significant appetite for such services already exists – but like any new technology, consumers need to feel confident about safety, cost and reliability. Air taxis may sound like science fiction to some, but we’re not far from a time when they could become a regular part of travel.”

Who’s looking to take an air taxi? Millennials are most enthusiastic about flying in an air taxi (65%), compared to 58% of overall respondents, as are those who flew more than 10 times in the past year (67%), compared with those who have taken 10 or fewer roundtrips (56%). Business travelers are also more interested than those flying for pleasure (60% versus 45%).

The top reason for utilizing an air taxi is traveling between cities that are within 100 miles of each other (41%). For example, an eVTOL is expected to take well under an hour to travel from New York to Philadelphia, compared to two to three hours by car. Beyond traveling between cities, other desired uses include travel from a suburban airport to a city center (31%) or traveling to a connecting flight in a nearby city (28%).

In addition to looking at consumer interest in air taxis, the research also highlighted safety as an understandable focus for all fliers, with almost two thirds (65%) saying it is an important consideration. This is the case for all type of travelers – whether occasional or frequent, business or pleasure – and demonstrates that the industry must ensure that safety is the highest priority.

## P&W AND COLLINS AEROSPACE TO LEAD ENGINE INTEGRATION AND SUPPLY POWER UNITS AND NACELLES FOR JETZERO BLENDED WING AIRCRAFT



**R**TX has entered into three agreements with JetZero, the developer of a novel blended wing body aircraft, to provide key systems for the airframer’s full-scale demonstrator. Pratt & Whitney will integrate the PW2040 engine and auxiliary power unit (APU); and Collins Aerospace will provide the nacelle and propulsion mounting structure. Pratt & Whitney and Collins Aerospace are RTX businesses.

“The aviation industry is focused on efforts to reduce operational costs by improving fuel efficiency and RTX has an extensive portfolio of technologies to help companies like JetZero do just that,” said Juan de Bedout, RTX’s chief technology officer. “Together, JetZero and RTX will play an important role in redefining the future of commercial and military aviation.”

“Securing partnerships for the demonstrator’s propulsion systems marks yet another meaningful milestone on our journey from design to test, to demonstration,” said Dan da Silva, chief operating officer for JetZero. “We continue to make steady progress on both the demonstrator program and the design and production capabilities of the airplane that will eventually be delivered to customers. We welcome these industry-leading suppliers to the program and are inspired to see the industry’s investment and belief in the blended wing airplane.”

JetZero aims to achieve a 50% reduction in fuel burn based on the aerodynamic efficiency of the blended wing and is planning test flights beginning in 2027.

Under the new agreements, RTX will provide the following systems for JetZero’s demonstrator:

Pratt & Whitney will integrate its PW2040 engine. The PW2000 engine family offers 37,000 to 43,000 pounds of thrust and powers all models of the Boeing 757 aircraft, with the F117 military derivative engine serving as the exclusive powerplant for the C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. The PW2040 model engine also powers the U.S. Air Force’s C-32A aircraft, the military version of the 757.

Pratt & Whitney Canada will provide the APS3200, an APU that employs the latest in advanced manufacturing techniques, including the use of composites. Nearly 3,800 APS3200 units have been manufactured and certified for aircraft.

Collins Aerospace will design and build nacelle structures including the inlet, fan cowl and fan duct, in addition to fairings and the engine support structure. Collins has designed, certified and manufactured nacelles for large commercial aircraft programs for decades, including Boeing 787, Airbus A350, A320neo, A220 and Embraer E2.

The demonstrator will validate key technologies that could benefit multiple customers, including commercial passenger planes, cargo transports and military aircraft – including a potential future aerial refueling tanker.



## 1ST FORMAL AGREEMENT TO USE NORWAY AS AN INTERNATIONAL TEST ARENA FOR ZERO- AND LOW-EMISSION AVIATION SIGNED



Avinor and the Civil Aviation Authority entered a collaboration to establish Norway as an international test arena for zero- and low-emission aviation. On March 4, 2025, the first formal agreement for demonstration flights was signed at Bergen Airport, Flesland, with American aircraft manufacturer BETA Technologies and Bristow Norway AS, a subsidiary of Bristow Group Inc.

**Demonstration Flights Start in Q3:** The demonstration flights will be cargo flights without passengers, conducted using BETA's ALIA CX300 conventional take-off and landing (eCTOL) aircraft, which will be flown by Bristow Norway. The cargo flights will operate initially between Stavanger Airport and Bergen Airport, starting from Stavanger in late summer, with the entire route commencing later in the fall.

BETA recently completed the production build of the ALIA aircraft that will perform these demonstrations. The aircraft, BETA's second production-intent vehicle, was manufactured at the company's scaled production factory in Burlington, Vermont, USA and has already received airworthiness certification for VFR, IFR, day and night flying from the FAA. It will arrive in Norway later this year.

Government Ambitions through the Aviation Strategy and the National Transport Plan "The government's goal in the National Aviation Strategy and the National Transport Plan 2025-2036 (NTP) is to accelerate the transition to zero- and low-emission aviation. To achieve this, one billion kroner has been allocated in the NTP. The first major initiative is the establishment of Norway as an international test arena for zero- and low-emission aircraft", says Minister of Transport Jon-Ivar Nygård.

"With an aviation industry committed to reducing emissions, a decentralized network of airports of various sizes, a significant regional air transport market, a proactive aviation authority, and a supplier industry specializing in battery-electric propulsion systems and hydrogen technology, we have a strong foundation for the early adoption of new technologies," says the Minister of Transport.

**Broad Involvement:** The goal of the test arena is to gain knowledge, learning, and to prepare the ecosystem and set the foundation for scaling. This means involving airlines, manufacturers, supplier industries, the energy sector, and other stakeholders.

"Avinor's role is to facilitate the infrastructure at airports and make the airspace available for actors who wish to test various zero- and low-emission aircraft in an operational environment. We seek more knowledge about what different technologies and aircraft require in terms of airport facilities and necessary energy supply needs. For example, we currently have a procurement process underway for fast chargers for electric aircraft in Bergen and Stavanger to accommodate the first test flight," says Karianne Helland Strand, Executive Vice President for Sustainability, Concept, and Infrastructure Development at Avinor. "Aviation is a safe mode of transport and a well-regulated sector. As the aviation authority, we will ensure that new technologies can be tested in accordance with regulations. We will learn how regulations and frameworks need to evolve to enable new technologies and concepts. Through this, we will build the necessary expertise early on for the solutions of tomorrow.

We are now establishing a connection point between the aviation industry and the support system in line with the government's objectives," says Director General of Civil Aviation, Lars Kobberstad.

"We see great value in real-world demonstrations, both to understand performance and mission fit, but also to bring local communities in what this technology offers," said Patrick Buckles, BETA's Sales Lead. "This year, as we operationalize this technology, we're excited to showcase how its low-cost, high-reliability operations can serve markets all over the world, including Norway."

"This regulatory sandbox evaluation project exemplifies our philosophy of crawl, walk, run for early adoption of new aviation technologies and solidifies the commitment to our vision to be a leader in innovative and sustainable aviation," said Dave Stepanek, Executive Vice President, Chief Transformation Officer for Bristow Group. "Bristow Norway is proud and honored to partner with this distinguished group of leaders in advanced air mobility."

## Archer Unveils Midnight "Launch Edition" Commercialization Program with ADA As 1st Customer Planning to Deploy Midnight This Year



Archer Aviation announced a "Launch Edition" commercialization program for its Midnight aircraft. The goal of this program is to establish a pragmatic and repeatable commercialization playbook to deploy Midnight in dozens of early adopter markets in advance of type certification of the aircraft by the FAA.

Abu Dhabi Aviation (ADA) is Archer's first Launch Edition customer, with plans to deploy an initial fleet of Midnight aircraft later this year. Archer personnel will now work together with Abu Dhabi Aviation to fly Midnight in the country in the coming months, targeting a passenger flight in Abu Dhabi later this year. The two will also collaborate across pilot training, flight operations and community engagement.

In addition to the Launch Edition aircraft, Archer plans to provide ADA with a team of pilots, technicians and engineers to support the initial operational ramp, helping ensure a safe and efficient deployment. Archer also plans to provide backend software infrastructure and front-end booking application to help power urban air mobility operations during the Launch Edition program.

The partnership between Archer and Abu Dhabi Aviation was formalized this week during a signing ceremony alongside the Abu Dhabi Investment Office, where Abu Dhabi Aviation signed a memorandum of understanding setting forth a framework to fund the deployment of the Midnight Launch Edition aircraft. His Excellency Nader Al Hammadi, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Aviation, said: "We have been observing the advancements in eVTOL technology for years, and we are proud to partner with Archer to bring this innovation to the UAE. Abu Dhabi Aviation has the expertise to develop a scalable urban air mobility service and we are excited to lead the way in launching the region's first electric air taxi service, starting right here in Abu Dhabi."

Archer will continue to work closely with ADA, the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) and its other established partners in the region on its goal of launching electric air taxis in Abu Dhabi this year.

"The unveiling of our Launch Edition program marks the beginning of the next chapter for Archer. This is how we'll bring Midnight from the manufacturing line to our first customers—and it's a playbook we'll run repeatedly as we scale our operations globally. Thank you to Abu Dhabi Aviation for being our first Launch Edition customer. We have a big year ahead," said Adam Goldstein, CEO and Founder of Archer.

Archer's goal is to transform urban travel, replacing 60-90-minute commutes by car with estimated 10-20-minute electric air taxi flights that are safe, sustainable, low noise and cost-competitive with ground transportation. Archer's Midnight is a piloted, four-passenger aircraft designed to perform rapid back-to-back flights with minimal charge time between flights.

## EHANG EH216-S CONDUCTS FIRST URBAN EVTOL FLIGHT UNDER U-ELCOME PROJECT IN EUROPE



EHang, the world's leading Urban Air Mobility technology platform company, announced a major milestone in the advancing UAM in Europe with the successful flight of its EH216-S pilotless eVTOL in the city of Benidorm, Spain. This is the first urban flight of a pilotless eVTOL aircraft in Europe.

The flight was conducted as part of the European Union's U-ELCOME (U-Space European Common Deployment) project, one of the flagship Digital Sky Demonstrators of the SESAR 3 JU. Coordinated by Eurocontrol, the initiative brings together 51 partners from France, Italy and Spain to advance implementation.

The event showcased the seamless integration of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) solutions within a controlled urban airspace. Conducted in a specially designated U-Space environment, the flight marked a groundbreaking demonstration of multi-drone coordination. Alongside the EH216-S eVTOL, up to twelve additional drones operated simultaneously, all managed through Spain's Air Navigation Service Provider, ENAIRE, using its U-Space system and services to ensure a safe and harmonized air traffic environment. This milestone represents a significant step forward in U-Space development in Europe, demonstrating how multiple pilotless aircraft can operate safely and efficiently in urban environments.

The EH216-S flight in Benidorm, the first pilotless eVTOL aircraft demonstration in a European city under EASA (European Union Aviation Safety Agency) regulations, marks a pivotal step in the future of urban aviation. This demonstration validates the feasibility of integrating unmanned aircraft systems into urban environments while in full compliance with stringent European safety and regulatory frameworks, and its success sets a precedent for future urban air mobility deployments across the continent. This landmark demonstration was attended by government authorities, industry stakeholders, and media representatives, underscoring the growing momentum behind UAM adoption in Europe.

Patricia Hervias, Project Manager en EUROCONTROL emphasized "Benidorm air taxi and drones' simultaneous demonstration, highlighted the capability of U-space services, enhancing emergency response and operational efficiency in complex urban environments. Through close cooperation with EASA, AESA, other national and international authorities, and Industry, U-ELCOME contributes to the consolidation of standardization and regulatory requirements for U-space services, accelerating their deployment and ensuring interoperability between U-space and traditional air traffic management systems."

Gonzalo Alonso, Head of International Business Development at ENAIRE, and leader of the Spanish U-ELCOME cluster, added "For the first time, the simultaneous operation of drones with an air taxi has been possible in a safe manner with multiple U-space Service Providers (USSP): ENAIRE, ITG and the UAB. It is one of the most advanced demonstrations in Europe."

The event also marked the signing of a strategic collaboration agreement between Benidorm's City Hall and EHang, which aims to advance Urban Air Mobility development in the region and position Benidorm as a pioneering city in next-generation aerial transportation and innovative tourism experiences. The Collaboration Agreement was signed by Ms. Victoria Jing Xiang, EHang's COO for Europe and LatAm, and Mr. Antonio Pérez, Mayor of Benidorm.

Mr. Antonio Pérez, Mayor of Benidorm, emphasized the significance of this event for the city's future, stating: "Benidorm is proud to be at the forefront of innovation and sustainability. The successful integration of Urban Air Mobility solutions represents a major step in our commitment to smarter, cleaner, and more efficient transportation systems. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with EHang, a global leader in Advanced Air Mobility, to make Benidorm a leader in next-generation mobility."

## UK ELECTRIC AIR TAXI SERVICE ON THE HORIZON - JOBY AND VIRGIN ATLANTIC ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP



Joby Aviation, Inc., a California-based company developing electric air taxis for commercial passenger service, announced a partnership with Virgin Atlantic, a premium long-haul UK airline, that will see the companies partner on the launch of Joby's revolutionary air taxi service in the UK.

The partnership builds on an existing agreement between Joby and Delta Air Lines - which owns a 49 percent stake in Virgin Atlantic - to launch service in the US and UK, and brings together brands committed to innovation, customer service and challenging the status quo.

The partnership aims to offer seamless, zero-emission, short-range journeys across the UK, starting with regional and city connections from Virgin Atlantic's hubs at Heathrow and Manchester Airport. Virgin Atlantic will support Joby's go-to-market efforts in the UK through marketing the service to their customers, engaging regulators alongside Joby and helping to build support for the development of landing infrastructure at key airports.

Joby's electric air taxi is designed to carry a pilot and up to four passengers at speeds of up to 200 mph and the partnership means Virgin Atlantic customers will be able to reserve a seat on Joby's aircraft through Virgin Atlantic's app, website and other channels.

Shai Weiss, CEO of Virgin Atlantic, said: "As a leader in sustainability and with innovation firmly in our DNA, we are delighted to be partnering with Joby to bring short-haul, zero-emission flight to airports and cities throughout the UK. Our strategic partnership combines Joby's expertise in design, engineering and technology with the power of Virgin Atlantic's brand and award-winning customer experience. We look forward to working together to bring Joby's service to the UK and to deliver greater connectivity for our customers."

Joe Ben Bevirt, Founder and CEO of Joby, commented: "Virgin Atlantic's commitment to delighting its customers reflects our experience with Delta and we couldn't imagine a better partner to work with in the UK. Together, we are committed to delivering faster options for mobility across the country, including for Virgin Atlantic and Delta customers as they head to the airport or move between UK towns and cities."

# ELECTRA SECURES 2,200 PRE-ORDERS FOR ITS GROUNDBREAKING ULTRA SHORT AIRCRAFT

Electra has secured 2,200 pre-orders for its groundbreaking EL9 Ultra Short hybrid-electric aircraft. Valued at nearly \$9 billion, Electra's order pipeline is one of the largest in the Advanced Air Mobility industry.

Electra's Ultra Short - which integrates blown lift and hybrid-electric propulsion to take off and land in just 150 feet -- enables air operators to connect communities that lack aviation infrastructure, fly into airports with strict noise restrictions, create new opportunities and business models for cargo services, and save travelers significant time and hassle. It also introduces entirely new logistics capabilities for warfighters including the ability to land on unimproved surfaces, improve safety and reduce cost, power ground operations, and carry out critical logistics transport.

"Electra's Ultra Short is the unlock for a new era of air travel - what we call Direct Aviation - that is as transformative as it's practical," said Marc Allen, CEO of Electra. "Hybrid-electric propulsion enables us to achieve what jet fuel alone can't do; we've created a fixed-wing airplane that delivers the access of a helicopter with 100 times less noise, 70 percent lower cost, improved safety, and dramatically reduced emissions. The response from the global aviation industry has been tremendous. Our customers see the EL9 aircraft as a true game-changer, and they're using its ultra-short takeoff capabilities to open the door to new routes in areas with space and noise constraints. Together, we're enabling a fundamental leap forward in advanced air mobility."

Electra's Ultra Short technology suite integrates blown lift aerodynamics with hybrid-



electric propulsion to create an aviation platform that would have been impossible a decade ago. It provides increased access, low noise, affordability, and sustainability in one solution that operates with existing infrastructure.

The nine-passenger EL9 delivers up to 3,000 pounds of payload capacity and a range up to 1,100 nautical miles, with in-flight battery recharging that eliminates the need for ground charging infrastructure. The ability to operate from compact spaces and unimproved surfaces including grass fields, parking lots, and repurposed heliports opens new routes and economic opportunities, making regional air mobility for passengers and cargo more affordable and accessible than ever before.

Electra's most recent customers include operators seeking the EL9's advantages in noise reduction, cost efficiency, lower emissions, and improved safety. New customers include: Akansel

(Turkey) and Dieng & Co Engineering (Senegal) in partnership with Flow Aero (US/Turkey), Caverton Helicopters (Nigeria), Copenhagen Helicopter and Copenhagen Air Taxi (Denmark), 5 Star Helicopter Tours (US), Global Vectra Helicorp (India), and Heliidade Heilporto (Brazil).

They join Electra's existing customers, which are incorporating the EL9 into their fleets to lower operational costs and open service to new destinations. This includes: Bristow Group, the world's leading global provider of vertical flight solutions to government and civil organizations, and Electra's operational launch partner; leading on-demand private aviation platforms including Indian operators JetSetGo and Blade India, Brazil-based Flapper in Latin America, Germany-based flyv in Europe, Finland-based LYGG in Scandinavia, and U.S. regional airlines JSX and Surf Air.

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# THALES DELIVERS THE WORLD'S 1ST AUTONOMOUS MINE HUNTING SYSTEM TO THE ROYAL NAVY



**M**arking a technological breakthrough in the conduct of mine countermeasure missions, this system drastically reduces the exposure risk for personnel on board ships while contributing to the safety of maritime routes, the backbone of the global economy.

The Royal Navy will receive its first four systems over the course of the year. Each system includes several integrated pieces of equipment and subsystems, enabling the accomplishment of highly complex missions: an Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV), an advanced towed sonar (TSAM) with a cutting-edge multivision sonar (SAMDIS), a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), and a lightweight operations centre (e-POC), all supported by a secure command and control system.

Thanks to its expertise in sensors, data analysis, and machine learning, Thales has developed a sonar analysis application, Mi-Map, which processes sonar data up to four times faster, allowing even more precise detection and classification of sea floor mines.

Deployed and operated from a mother ship and coastal bases, the platforms can handle vast volumes of data, enabling operators to expedite the process of identifying and neutralising mines. This innovative system aligns with the British government's ambitious policy to position the UK as a global leader in autonomous maritime technologies.

Minister for Defence Procurement and Industry, Rt Hon Maria Eagle MP, said: "This delivery marks a significant milestone in our mine-hunting capabilities and the autonomous technology will keep Britain and our Royal Navy sailors safer by identifying & removing them from mines. It has also supported hundreds of skilled jobs across UK industry - a clear demonstration that defence is an engine for economic growth."

Rebecca Smith, Member of Parliament for South West Devon, attended the ceremony at the Thales Maritime Autonomy Centre in Plymouth, officially marking the delivery of this cutting-edge technology capable of detecting and neutralising the growing threat of naval mines.

"I welcome today's announcement by Thales regarding the delivery to the Royal Navy of the world's first end-to-end autonomous mine hunting system. I am pleased to see that a city with such a prestigious naval history as Plymouth now finds itself at the heart of a future rich in innovations for the Royal Navy. I hope we continue to see new activities develop, resulting in new local jobs in high-tech maritime areas. In the current climate, it is important to ensure strong military and industrial cooperation across Europe, and I am proud to see Plymouth playing a key role in effectively supporting the relationship between the UK and France", declared Rebecca Smith, MP South West Devon

Phil Siveter, CEO of Thales in the UK, stated, "We are extremely proud to deliver the world's first end-to-end autonomous mine hunting system to the Royal Navy. With the introduction of AI and advanced sensor technology, this innovation marks a new era in naval defence and underlines our unwavering commitment to providing cutting-edge solutions that enhance the capabilities of our armed forces. The Royal Navy will now have a powerful tool to protect its national interests and maintain safety at sea."

A historic partner of the Royal Navy for over a century, Thales has long contributed to the advanced technologies that equip its sonar and mine hunting systems. The Franco-British MMCM program highlights Thales's determination to provide world-class capabilities in these areas. Significant investments made by the UK have maintained over 200 skilled jobs, particularly at Thales sites in Somerset and Plymouth, strengthening the entire ecosystem of suppliers and partners.

## BLUEHALO AWARDED \$30.7M CONTRACT TO SUPPORT US NAVY'S MARITIME EXPEDITIONARY STANDOFF RESPONSE PROGRAM



**B**lueHalo, the company transforming the future of global defense through industry-leading underwater robotic systems announced it has been awarded a \$30,735,784 contract to provide systems engineering and support services for BlueHalo's Mission Specialist Defender systems, the Maritime Expeditionary Standoff Response (MESR) remotely operated vehicle (ROV). The five-year contract was issued by the Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific and supports the U.S. Navy's ongoing operations utilizing the Mission Specialist Defender systems.

The award follows the U.S. Navy's \$92.6 M MESR contract awarded to VideoRay in May 2024 and further reinforces the company's role in supporting the U.S. Navy with advanced underwater robotic technology for expeditionary missions, mine countermeasures, and underwater security. VideoRay was acquired by BlueHalo last year.

"This follow-on contract highlights the U.S. Navy's commitment to adapting and customizing our commercial off-the-shelf defense solutions to meet the evolving needs of its expeditionary forces," said Jonathan MoneyMaker, CEO of BlueHalo. "We are honored to continue our support in delivering cutting-edge, mission-critical ROVs that enhance maritime security, reconnaissance, and response capabilities for the fleet."

The company's Mission Specialist Defender and other unmanned underwater robots set the performance standard for the most challenging, mission-critical applications in mine countermeasures and other man-portable unmanned undersea applications. The Mission Specialist Defender provides unparalleled maneuverability, payload integration, and operational flexibility, ensuring mission success in high-risk maritime environments.

## HII TOPS 700 REMUS UUVS SOLD, STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S UNDERSEA ADVANTAGE



**H**ill America's largest shipbuilder and all-domain technologies and solutions provider, has sold more than 700 REMUS uncrewed underwater vehicles (UUVs) to customers globally, delivering the undersea advantage and expanding HII's lead as the world's largest producer.

"HII's investment in advanced undersea autonomy is yielding promising returns, most notably in demonstrating to our customers how this technology can be integrated to support their evolving and critical mission needs," HII President and CEO Chris Kastner said. "From mine countermeasures to anti-submarine warfare, REMUS continues to safeguard strategic waterways and enhance maritime security for the U.S. and its allies. The platform's longevity and adaptability reflect HII's dedication to providing reliable, cutting-edge solutions for global partners."

The REMUS UUV family delivers critical advantages across modern naval operations, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), mine countermeasures, anti-submarine warfare, and electronic warfare. These autonomous systems can operate independently or teamed with crewed platforms – such as Virginia-class nuclear submarines – expanding operational reach while reducing detection risk and personnel exposure.

More than 700 REMUS UUVs have been sold in over 30 countries, including 14 NATO members. Notably, over 90% of the vehicles delivered in the past 23 years remain operational, demonstrating the platform's durability and adaptability to evolving technologies. HII is currently manufacturing small uncrewed undersea vehicles (SUUVs) for the U.S. Navy's Lionfish System program. The contract, potentially growing to 200 vehicles over five years, is valued at more than \$347 million. Based on the REMUS 300, the Lionfish System is a highly portable SUUV with open architecture, and modular payload options. In early 2022, REMUS 300 was the first Defense Innovation Unit competitive selection to transition to a program of record, selected as the U.S. Navy's Lionfish next-generation SUUV.

**Proven Performance in Global Operations :** REMUS UUVs have been deployed in diverse operational environments, including mine clearance in the Persian Gulf, NATO exercises in the North Sea, and undersea surveillance in the Indo-Pacific. With advanced sonar and sensor technologies, these systems enhance situational awareness and provide naval forces with a tactical edge in contested environments.

As undersea threats evolve, HII remains committed to delivering next-generation autonomous solutions that strengthen operational effectiveness and sustain maritime dominance. The more than 700 REMUS vehicles sold reinforces HII's leadership in uncrewed systems and its role as a trusted partner in naval innovation.

**Uncrewed Systems Enhancing Naval Operations :** In mine countermeasures missions, REMUS is instrumental in ensuring safe passage for naval and commercial vessels. The U.S. Navy has deployed REMUS in strategic waterways, including the Persian Gulf, the Baltic and Black Seas, while NATO allies have used the platform in joint exercises across the Mediterranean, the North Sea, and above the Arctic Circle.

Additionally, Uncrewed Systems state of the art production facility in Pocasset, Massachusetts utilizes modular and scalable manufacturing methods that will support an increased demand of multiple product lines. From the 300m SUUV to the 600m newly developed REMUS 620, both next generation modular UUVs were designed with ease of maintenance and payload swapping depending on the mission set.

## SAILDRONE AND PALANTIR ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO ADVANCE AI-POWERED MARITIME INTELLIGENCE

**S**aildrone announced a strategic partnership with Palantir Technologies set to revolutionize maritime intelligence capabilities. This collaboration will enable the rapid scaling of autonomous systems to deliver advanced maritime AI solutions—at a time when conventional naval assets are scarce. In an era of mounting global threats and critically constrained shipbuilding capacity, this partnership represents a paradigm shift in maritime security operations.

Saildrone operates the world's largest fleet of operationally deployed USVs, providing critical maritime domain awareness to the US Navy, Department of Homeland Security, and international allies. These autonomous vehicles utilize sophisticated and proprietary edge-computing AI/ML algorithms to monitor activities both above and below the sea surface, detecting threats including narcotics trafficking, illegal fishing operations, and adversary submarines.

As demand for Saildrone services surges, the company will integrate Palantir's sophisticated AI cloud infrastructure to enable rapid scaling across its entire operational spectrum—from transforming its manufacturing, supply chain, and fleet operations with Warp Speed to enabling AI-powered tasking of autonomous assets in the field.



"As global threats continue to evolve, we're seeing rapidly increasing demand for our maritime security solutions," said Richard Jenkins, founder and CEO at Saildrone. "Leveraging Palantir's sophisticated manufacturing and AI tools will allow us to streamline manufacturing and radically enhance fleet capabilities. While others make promises about tomorrow's technology, we face complex global threats today. This partnership with Palantir ensures we deliver solutions today that outpace tomorrow's threats."

With a decade of operations and nearly 2 million nautical miles sailed globally, Saildrone has amassed the world's most comprehensive dataset of maritime intelligence at the sea surface. Palantir's advanced AI capabilities will fuse this vast proprietary dataset with other external sources, delivering unprecedented insights for maritime intelligence, surveillance, and targeting applications.

"We built Warp Speed to accelerate the organizations at the forefront of American reindustrialization—from the factory floor to the open ocean," said Emily Nguyen, Palantir's Head of Industrials. "Saildrone is delivering the future of Maritime AI, and we are extremely proud to provide software that supports the sustained competitive advantage of their USVs."

## ZE GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS PARTNERS WITH HAVOCAI TO DELIVER NEXT-GENERATION COMPUTER VISION CAPABILITIES FOR US DEFENSE CUSTOMERS

**Z**E Government Solutions (ZEGS), a wholly owned subsidiary of AI-based gun detection leader ZeroEyes announced it has partnered with HavocAI Inc, a leading innovator in autonomous uncrewed surface vessel technology, to deliver customized computer vision capabilities that will be integrated with HavocAI's maritime autonomy platforms.

HavocAI's technology enables a single operator to command and control thousands of autonomous assets. The company's platform is designed to provide significant cost efficiencies, operational reliability, and scalable solutions for a wide range of applications, from defense missions to commercial ventures.

"We are thrilled to partner with the ZeroEyes team, many of whom are military veterans, to work with us on developing and delivering computer vision capability to our defense customers," said Paul Lwin, CEO of HavocAI. "These capabilities will help us to build mission-critical aspects of our autonomy platform."

"ZeroEyes has mastered the ability to build and deploy customized computer vision solutions for a wide range of government customers," noted Dustin Kising, Executive Vice President of ZE Government Solutions. "We are very excited to partner with the HavocAI team, who are leaders in deploying maritime autonomy and unmanned surface vessels for critical national security mission sets."

# TELEFÓNICA REVOLUTIONIZES THE USE OF DRONES WITH A COMPREHENSIVE AND SECURE SERVICE BASED ON OPEN GATEWAY APIS

Telefónica takes a decisive step towards transforming air mobility in Spain with the presentation at the Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 of a demo with an innovative comprehensive service for autonomous drones in collaboration with Nokia. This proposal, based on the company's high-performance 5G network and the advanced capabilities of Open Gateway, enables the safe, efficient and scalable integration of autonomous drone operations in airspace.

2025 is a key year for the use of drones, as the gradual entry into force of the U-Space regulations will allow more advanced and complex operations in European airspace. This is the regulatory and digital ecosystem being developed in Europe to safely and efficiently integrate unmanned aircraft operations into the airspace, which will significantly change the way drones are operated today. With the demo presented today at MWC, Telefónica shows that it is ready to face the challenges of this new paradigm.

Telefónica's 'Open Gateway 5G Drones' demo is based on three fundamental pillars: firstly, the 5G network combined with Open Gateway, which offers high-speed connectivity and the application of APIs that facilitate the planning and execution of safe and efficient flights, which in turn allows risk anticipation and route optimisation.

Secondly, in artificial intelligence and computational power applied to drones, two technologies that offer a significant advantage in various use cases, allowing drones to perform complex tasks such as monitoring, control and predictive maintenance of critical infrastructure, delivery of materials or even fire prevention, among others.

Finally, in Telefónica's remote control centre, which acts as the brain of the ecosystem. From here, the operations of the drones and their automated nests, located tens or even hundreds of kilometres away, are monitored and managed from any location in Spain. This includes flight planning, real-time monitoring and preventive maintenance, ensuring a complete and safe service.

Telefónica offers comprehensive management of drone nests

Telefónica presents a differential service in the drone ecosystem through the integral management of automated drone bases for the operation of



autonomous drones. Drone bases are automated stations designed to house, recharge and deploy drones autonomously, functioning as operational bases for the drones, allowing them to carry out both routine and on-demand operations without the need for direct human intervention. Telefónica's comprehensive service covers, in addition to the network of drones and their nests, their maintenance, the management of flight permits for compliance with all safety regulations and standards, as well as flight piloting and operation.

The integration of 5G technology in this service is key to providing a greater flight range, a high data capacity, which is essential for the transmission of videos sent by the drone when it carries out a mission, and low latency, which allows the drone to be controlled in real time or managed in operations where the drone needs to react quickly to changes in its environment.

At the Telefónica stand at this year's MWC, users will be able to learn about Nokia Drone Networks, a 5G-based "drone in a box" solution (i.e. it includes the drone, base station and control software) with an open software architecture and integration with both private and public networks, supporting large geographical areas with a drone-as-a-service model. This demonstration is part of an ongoing collaboration between Telefónica and Nokia for the benefit of public safety and mission-critical industries.

To demonstrate the possibilities offered by autonomous drone flight planning, Telefónica is showing three use cases in Barcelona with real applications integrated with the AirborneRF platform (from Dimetor) and Open Gateway's 5G network

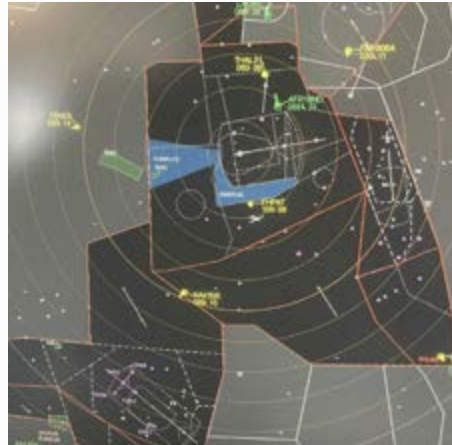
capabilities. One of the use cases on display is related to healthcare, where an air corridor is used to transport medical supplies between hospitals. Another is related to environmental protection, where the drone network is used to detect heat sources for fire prevention. And a third case focuses on the logistics sector for all types of industries, where inventory can be carried out autonomously thanks to drones scanning the QR codes of parts and goods in warehouses, without the need for operators and machines.

Telefónica has also implemented an advanced anti-drone system throughout the country, a technologically advanced solution designed to guarantee the safety of critical infrastructures, crowded events and confined spaces. This system, based on the latest radio frequency technology, detects and neutralises unauthorised drones with great precision, even in complex scenarios. Its effectiveness and reliability have been proven in various environments, consolidating it as a key tool in the protection of airspace. Telefónica's anti-drone system stands out for its scalability, allowing it to adapt to future technologies and operational needs. Thanks to its ability to integrate with other security systems, the system not only responds to current threats, but also anticipates market developments, reinforcing Telefónica's commitment to technological innovation and security. To demonstrate the possibilities offered by autonomous drone flight planning, Telefónica is presenting three use cases in Barcelona, with real applications integrated into the AirborneRF platform (from Dimetor), together with the 5G network capabilities of Open.

# SESAR JU IRINA PROJECT TESTS SAFE INTEGRATION OF LARGE UNMANNED AIRCRAFT IN EUROPEAN AIRSPACE

The SESAR JU-funded IRINA project has launched fast-time and real-time simulations to support the safe integration of instrument flight rules remotely piloted aircraft systems into European airspace. These exercises, conducted in France, Spain, and at EUROCONTROL's Innovation Hub, aim to validate detect and avoid (DAA) technology and optimize air traffic controller (ATCO) workload, contributing to more efficient airspace management.

Led by EUROCONTROL with 10 European industrial partners, IRINA is addressing current limitations that require segregated airspace for remotely piloted aircraft system operations. The project is testing performance models—including MALE, TUAS, and LUAS—and advancing



Technology Readiness Level 6 (TRL6). The simulations will integrate remotely piloted aircraft systems into both controlled (classes A-C) and uncontrolled (classes D-G) airspace, ensuring safe coexistence with manned aircraft.

Upcoming validation exercises in Madrid (June 2025) will refine encounter models and enhance ground-based safety systems, incorporating downlinked aircraft parameters (DAPs) into key safety nets such as short-term conflict alert (STCA) and minimum safe altitude warning (MSAW). International stakeholder workshops are planned for summer and year-end to share findings and advance regulatory discussions on remotely piloted aircraft systems integration.

## SIGHTLINE APPLICATIONS ACQUIRES ATHENA AI

SightLine Applications, a leading developer of sensor processing software for autonomous and uncrewed systems, backed by Artemis Capital Partners ("Artemis"), announced that it has acquired Athena AI, an Australia-based specialist in AI-enabled computer vision and decision support for defense applications.

Athena AI's field-proven, highly interoperable vision-based AI systems and trained models enable enhanced real-time situational awareness and quicker, more effective decision-making on the edge in critical mission areas of: Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), Counter-Uncrewed Aerial Systems (C-UAS), Fire Control, Mission Planning, and Battlefield Management.

By merging Artificial Intelligence and application engineering expertise and integrating Athena AI's advanced capabilities into SightLine's core image processing platform, SightLine will deliver an enhanced suite of next generation features and tools to its customers and end users. SightLine's expanded global presence into Australia mirrors the US Department of Defense's strategic focus on US and Indo-Pacific Command capabilities and



positions SightLine to support the shared AI technology goals of longstanding allied nations – United States and Australia – as set forth in AUKUS Pillar 2.

Jon Atwood, CEO at SightLine, expressed his enthusiasm for the deal, "the SightLine team is thrilled to announce the acquisition of Athena AI, as it perfectly aligns with SightLine's vision to be the proven leader in sensor processing technologies that enable mission success and autonomy. In addition to broadening our product portfolio, we look forward to delivering high-value

feature and functionality improvements to our customers as they pursue advanced autonomy and accelerated decision support. By uniting with the talented Athena team, we are building an organization with complementary strengths to meet emerging defense priorities and evolving end user requirements with agility and application expertise – in order to drive the next phase of SightLine's growth."

Stephen Bornstein, Founder and Managing Director of Athena AI and now Chief Product Officer at SightLine, stated "the Athena AI team is excited about this next stage of our journey, partnering with SightLine to deepen access in the US market, leveraging industry leading video processing technologies and enabling next generation features for our customers. We look forward to being able to support key US customers with a stronger presence from the SightLine team as well as the synergies in technology that the integrated product line will now be able to achieve."

Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo (US) and Corrs Chambers Westgarth (Australia) served as legal advisors to SightLine. Cooley (US) and SBA Law (Australia) served as legal advisors to Athena AI.

# ARPAS-UK DISAPPOINTED BY THE CAA'S DECISION TO CONFIRM MAJOR SERVICE CHARGE INCREASES



**A** RPAS-UK is disappointed with the CAA's decision to proceed with significant increases to the service charges for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) for 2025/26, despite our calls for moderation and fairness.

In our comprehensive response to the CAP3047 consultation in January, we stated that the proposed service charge increases for RPAS operators were significant and disproportionate. Today's publication has essentially confirmed the fees will be introduced as per CAP3047 consultation, with little amendment.

**DSCO:** a critical tool but its cost is challenging given the current size of the community. As detailed in the consultation and confirmed through our engagement with the CAA, a major driver behind these fee increases is the ongoing cost of the DSCO online application platform, which reportedly requires £17 million per year to operate. On one hand, we recognise DSCO as a critical tool for the future of RPAS regulation in the UK. A fully digitised platform should enable the adoption of the SORA risk methodology, offering a streamlined, consistent, and predictable application process. It promises to facilitate the approval of higher-risk or innovative operations while aligning the CAA with international safety standards. This benefits not only RPAS operators but also enhances public safety and confidence in the sector. The £8 million development cost has, commendably, been funded from the CAA's own efficiency reserves. On the other hand, the ongoing cost burden of DSCO is significant relative to the size of the UK RPAS community.

We can estimate that CAA revenues directly from user-payers service charges in the specific category were approx £1M per year (3000 PDRA01 holders x £234 + 100 OSC holders x say top £3000 a year). This is actually (very) modest. Funding an additional £1.7 million in annual operating costs on top of existing labour costs, from a direct user-payer revenue base of just £1 million, is effectively impossible.

An increase of PDRA01 fees from £234 to £500 per year should be manageable for most businesses, though it still represents a doubling of costs for the most common category of operators.

The real pressure lies in SORA applications, particularly if operators need to develop multiple SORA applications, and excess oversight hours are charged at £330/hour.

**Lack of Transparency and Communication :** Although we have had several exchanges with the CAA on the matter of the Charges, it is disappointing that these significant increases were confirmed without accompanying explanations or detailed rationale. Clear communication about the cost drivers and the fee evolution is essential to maintain trust and encourage compliance across the sector. Transparency is also vital to give operators the visibility they need on how these charges are structured and what additional changes may lie ahead.

**The absolute importance of generic location, or multiple sites, SORA applications :** This emphasises how vital it is that generic location, or multiple sites SORA applications are accessible and affordable. A single, annual SAIL II Operational Authorisation, now costing £3,495 (a major increase vs current OSC fees) would provide operators with the certainty and stability they need.

## CONSTELLIS TRAINING CENTER TO HOST SECOND DRONE RODEO ON JUNE 3, 2025



**D** rone Rodeo 2025, Constellis' second Unmanned Systems Industry Day, will take place on June 3, 2025, in Moyock, NC. This public event will feature live demonstrations of the latest unmanned aerial, ground, and underwater systems, as well as cutting-edge technologies such as Counter-UAS (C-UAS), ATAK integration, LIDAR, remote sensors, communications solutions, and Constellis' Layered Extended Security Operations (LEXSO) platform. Attendees will see firsthand how these innovations are shaping the future as leading manufacturers and tech companies showcase their newest advancements. Drone Rodeo 2025 also provides a unique opportunity to network with industry experts in national security, law enforcement, defense, and logistics. The event will bring together operators and thought leaders to explore the latest developments and discuss how these technologies are transforming security and defense operations.

The event will take place at the Constellis Training Center (CTC), a 3,600-acre, state-of-the-art proving ground featuring a 2,600-foot runway, airfield, multi-use shooting ranges, driving track, and advanced training capabilities. "We're thrilled to build on the success of Drone Rodeo 2024 and continue bringing together industry leaders, government agencies, and security professionals," said Andrew Hartsog, Constellis EVP for Mission Support Services. "Drone Rodeo 2025 will be a key event for connecting the unmanned systems community and advancing technologies that address emerging security and defense challenges."

Drone Rodeo 2025 is open to anyone 18 years or older and promises to be an event you won't want to miss. For more information and to register, visit <https://constellis.com/drone-rodeo-2025/>.



# HIGH LANDER LAUNCHES APAC OPERATIONS FROM NEW SINGAPORE SUBSIDIARY, HIGH LANDER APAC



**H**igh Lander, a global provider of drone fleet management (DFM) and unmanned traffic management (UTM) software solutions, has launched a new subsidiary headquartered in Singapore: High Lander APAC.

High Lander APAC will serve clients in Singapore and other key markets in the APAC region, with operations driven by a planned initial team of ten employees in 2025. Building on High Lander's existing client base in Singapore, High Lander APAC will enable businesses and public authorities to enhance, manage and expand their aerial operations, and provide advanced airspace management infrastructure in a region that's moving to implement advanced air mobility (AAM) networks.

"We are very proud to see our latest overseas operation open its doors. High Lander APAC provides us with a permanent local presence in Singapore and will enable us to more effectively develop opportunities in this region, with an initial focus on Singapore itself, Thailand and Vietnam," said Alon Abelson, CEO and founder of High Lander. "We chose Singapore as the base of

our APAC network because its innovation-friendly landscape makes it a regional leader regarding drone technology - this, in conjunction with our strong local connections, make it the natural choice for our APAC office."

High Lander APAC will market, retail, operate and provide technical support for two hardware-agnostic software solutions that together provide a complete infrastructure for safe UAS operations at any scale. Namely, Orion DFM is a mission creation platform and command center for professional drone operations, while Vega UTM provides end-to-end airspace management and regulatory capabilities giving airspace authorities control of increasingly crowded skies and enabling harmony between manned and unmanned aircraft.

"The drone ecosystem in Singapore is rich with commercial opportunities, including in deliveries and security services for high-value industrial sites - verticals for which Orion is specifically designed and in which our operation teams are deeply experienced. Furthermore, the Singaporean authorities lead the region in the development of UAS-friendly safety infrastructure, a philosophy

that aligns with ours, and a requirement that Vega UTM can fulfill from end to end," added Abelson.

Singapore is home to one of the world's most developed drone ecosystems, thanks to forward-thinking authorities such as the Home Team Science and Technology Agency (HTX) and the Maritime & Port Authority Of Singapore (MPA), as well as leading companies such as Skyports and Avetics. Against a backdrop of smart city initiatives, Singaporean public safety agencies have long used drones in their day-to-day operations, and commercial user penetration is projected to reach a staggering 7.5% by 2029. Furthermore, the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore is moving to implement UTM infrastructure, recently ruling that drones must be equipped with Remote ID by the end of 2025 and signing an agreement with the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau to develop joint AAM regulations.

High Lander APAC is High Lander's third international expansion, following the opening of its regional office in Abu Dhabi and launch of its Brazilian subsidiary, BIRDS, in São Paulo. A European subsidiary is planned for Q2 2025.

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Meeting Quality & Reliability Standards for Space & Defence programs

Dr. SUBBA RAO PAVULURI, CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR,

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