



# Press Release

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## **Vertical Flight Society Announces Continued Strong Growth**

*VFS and its membership are growing to support revolutionary military and civil vertical flight aircraft developments*

- 6,000 individual members — 8% growth this year and 33% over past four years
- 120 corporate members — 20% growth this year and 70% over past four years
- 250 eVTOL concepts now catalogued in the VFS World eVTOL Aircraft Directory — an increase of two-thirds over the past year

**Fairfax, Virginia, USA, Jan. 13, 2020** — The Vertical Flight Society, the world’s leading non-profit organization working to advance vertical flight, announces today that it continues its strong growth in membership as a result of the unprecedented global investment in advanced new military and civil vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft.

Worldwide increases in research and development (R&D) funding by governments and industry are fueling a number of next-generation rotorcraft efforts. The US Department of Defense (DoD) and American industry are investing billions of dollars in preparation for multiple acquisition programs under the Pentagon’s Future Vertical Lift (FVL) program. Meanwhile, as the Leonardo AW609 civil tiltrotor prepares to enter service, the European Union, industry and academia are investing more than \$2B in advanced civil rotorcraft for the development of the Airbus Racer compound helicopter and Leonardo Next Generation Civil Tiltrotor demonstrators under the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking.

Meanwhile, the promise of urban air mobility (UAM) and other emerging markets is driving development of electric and hybrid-electric-powered vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft design concepts. Some \$2B has gone into exploring the potential of this transformative capability, with much of the funding coming from outside of the traditional aerospace industry.

“This is a pivotal period in vertical flight,” said VFS Executive Director Mike Hirschberg. “We are witnessing an unprecedented explosion in innovation, and the Vertical Flight Society is both the community and the catalyst leading this change.”

VFS has been the leading advocate for developing advanced military rotorcraft and increasing R&D funding over the past 20 years. An historic number of new development programs now taking shape across the US military services. In addition, the Society has been at the forefront of what it calls “The Electric VTOL Revolution,” having held the world’s first meeting of the eVTOL development community in 2014.

The Society's sold-out 7th Annual Electric VTOL Symposium — being held next week in San Jose, California, as part of the VFS Transformative Vertical Flight 2020 conference — continues as the world's largest and longest-running event focusing on the incredible promise, progress and challenges of eVTOL aircraft. The Society's Electric VTOL News™ website, [www.eVTOL.news](http://www.eVTOL.news), the first and foremost eVTOL information website, catalogues all known eVTOL aircraft; this comprehensive directory now includes more than 250 eVTOL aircraft concepts — a leap of 100 aircraft since this time last year — representing 187 different companies/developers.

“We are seeing continued exceptionally strong growth in investments and developments in vertical flight aircraft,” commented Hirschberg. “In fact, there have never been more different types of vertical flight aircraft in development — many by startup companies — even during the ‘golden age of VTOL’ in the 1950s and ‘60s.”

Largely as a consequence of this growth and the high demand for VFS benefits — including technical resources, talent acquisition, networking and risk management — the Society experienced an impressive growth of 8% in individual members, 20% in corporate members and 3.5% in educational members during the period Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2019.

VFS now has 6,000 individual members, with nearly 25% residing outside the United States; 120 corporate members, with 36% being non-US-owned companies; and 30 universities who have joined as educational members, with 40% being outside the US. Compared to four years ago (Jan. 1, 2016), these numbers represent 33% more individual members, 70% more corporate members and more than twice as many educational members.

VFS was founded as the American Helicopter Society in 1943 by the visionaries of the early helicopter industry, who believed that technological cooperation and collaboration were essential to support this new type of aircraft. Today, history is repeating itself with VFS playing a similar role helping to advance today's revolutionary VTOL aircraft.

Over the past three-quarters of a century, VFS — the world's only membership organization that spans the global civil/military and manned/unmanned vertical flight community in industry, governments and academia — has played a key leadership role in advancing the industry. VFS holds the largest and longest-running vertical flight technical conference in the world, which this year will be its 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum & Technology Display, May 19-21, 2020, in Montreal, Quebec: [www.vtol.org/forum](http://www.vtol.org/forum).

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**The Vertical Flight Society**

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