



Press Release

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Electric VTOL Aircraft Developments Advancing Despite Pandemic

Vertical Flight Society and its members continue to move forward to support transformative vertical flight aircraft developments

Fairfax, Virginia, USA, Jan. 12, 2021 — The Vertical Flight Society (VFS), the world’s leading non-profit organization working to advance vertical flight, reports today that the growth of world’s electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft developments have continued apace despite the global pandemic.

“This past year saw continued growth and progress in eVTOL developments,” said Mike Hirschberg, VFS Executive Director. “Our members in industry, academia and government agencies around the world have been tackling the toughest challenges in vertical flight, proving out the promise of this new approach to air mobility.”

Even while the commercial aviation industry saw massive economic impacts, investment in eVTOL has continued at the rate of about \$1B per year. Some \$5B has been invested into eVTOL aircraft and systems development to date, with much of the funding coming from outside of the traditional aerospace industry. The eVTOL industry has grown at an exponential pace with thousands of engineers, programmers and technologists now employed by eVTOL developers worldwide.

Nearly 250 companies and innovators have been studying the promise and challenges of eVTOL, with more than 400 eVTOL aircraft concepts now catalogued by VFS. Two dozen companies are now known to be flying full-scale or large-scale multi-passenger eVTOL aircraft. Last year saw a number of first flights, as well as a significant increase in flight-testing — demonstrating electric VTOL capabilities and expanded the aircraft performance envelopes.

Annual Electric VTOL Symposium

VFS has been at the forefront of what it calls the “Electric VTOL Revolution” since 2014 when it held the world’s first meeting of the eVTOL development community. Later this month, the Society’s 8th Annual Electric VTOL Symposium — being held online Jan. 26–28 in conjunction with its 9th Biennial Autonomous VTOL Technical Meeting — continues as the world’s largest and longest-running event focusing on the incredible promise, progress and challenges of eVTOL aircraft.

As in previous years, the annual symposium will present the latest insights, trends and progress in eVTOL developments. This month’s symposium features keynote presentations by government leaders from

NASA, the US Army, US Air Force and the FAA, as well as industry keynotes from Boeing, Joby Aviation and Honeywell executives. More than 50 additional VIP speakers and panelists in the symposium cover important topics regarding electric VTOL, while 25 technical papers on drones, autonomy and advanced air mobility (AAM) will be presented as part of the Autonomous VTOL Technical Meeting. Details are available at www.vtol.org/eVTOL2021.

When VFS launched the first meeting in 2014, the idea of electric VTOL aircraft was greeted with widespread skepticism, but growing technical progress, flight demonstrations, government validation and private investment have helped reverse public perception. It is now recognized that the vertical flight market is poised for significant expansion over the next few years as eVTOL aircraft enter service that can have higher performance than conventional helicopters for certain missions, as well as lower operating costs and lower noise.

Exponential Growth Continues in the eVTOL Industry

As of today, the Society has cataloged 407 different electric VTOL concepts from 245 companies and innovators on its authoritative World eVTOL Aircraft Directory at www.evtol.news. More than 150 new designs were added in 2020. When VFS launched the site in April 2017, only a dozen eVTOL programs were under development. The site now also includes 435 eVTOL news stories, including some 200 in-depth articles from the Society's *Vertiflite* magazine, the leading periodical on eVTOL and rotorcraft developments.

VFS has also seen record growth in corporate members continue. As of Jan. 1, more than 135 companies are now members of VFS, a 15% growth over 2020 and a doubling over the past five years. Much of this growth in members is due to the extensive support efforts and resources that VFS provides to the eVTOL industry, including technical resources, talent acquisition, educational opportunities and networking.

“Despite the pandemic, or perhaps because of it, companies around the world that are seeking to succeed with eVTOL technologies turn to VFS,” said Hirschberg. “We have been leading efforts to advance electric vertical flight for the past seven years and have been working tirelessly to expand the eVTOL community.”

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 eVTOL aircraft.

VFS holds the largest and longest-running vertical flight technical conference in the world, which this year will be its 77th Annual Forum & Technology Display on May 11-13, 2021, which is planned for West Palm Beach, Florida: www.vtol.org/forum.

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