ELECTRA DEMONSTRATES RUNWAY-FREE OPERATIONS WITH ULTRA-SHORT TAKEOFF AND LANDING AT MANHATTAN HELIPORT

News / Business aviation, Manufacturer

Electra has successfully completed the takeoff and landing of its hybrid-electric Ultra Short aircraft at Downtown Skyport in Lower Manhattan, in what is believed to be the first time a fixed-wing aircraft without vertical takeoff capability has operated from the heliport. The demonstration is the latest milestone in Electra's Life Beyond Runways initiative, highlighting its vision for Direct Aviation, a new approach to regional mobility designed to connect travelers more directly and efficiently.

By leveraging accessible departure and arrival points closer to passengers' origins and destinations, Direct Aviation aims to bypass congested highways and crowded airport hubs. According to Electra's market outlook, the concept could reduce travel times by approximately three hours and 45 minutes between New York City and Boston, three hours and 30 minutes to Washington, D.C., and 45 minutes to Philadelphia.

Over the past year, Electra has advanced its regional air mobility concept through a series of demonstrations conducted in collaboration with an expanding network of partners. As an inaugural participant in the FAA's Advanced Air Mobility Integration Pilot Program, the company has

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engaged with state aviation and airport authorities, leading FBO operators, real estate developers investing in urban access infrastructure, and more than 60 airline operators exploring future regional Direct Aviation services.

The foundation of this vision lies in the combination of Electra's Ultra Short aircraft and the emerging ecosystem of regional air service providers. The aircraft integrates hybrid-electric propulsion with proprietary blown-lift technology, enabling takeoffs and landings in as little as 150 feet.

This capability allows operations from a wide range of existing infrastructure, including heliports, barges, fields and parking lots, eliminating the dependence on traditional runways. Beyond transforming regional passenger transport, the technology also presents significant opportunities for defense and special mission applications.

Electra believes the ecosystem is gaining momentum because its Ultra Short aircraft is the first airplane designed to meet six critical requirements for large-scale advanced air mobility adoption: helicopter-like accessibility, low-noise operations, fixed-wing economics, safety, payload capacity and operational range. The company maintains that only aircraft capable of delivering all six attributes will achieve practical and scalable deployment.

Marc Allen, CEO of Electra commented: "Today we made aviation history in downtown Manhattan by landing a fixed-wing aircraft on a heliport. This same capability will fundamentally transform how people travel in our nation by making it faster and easier to get them to their destinations. What's even more interesting is that we didn't need to build a new runway to do it. We worked with partners who see new possibilities in existing infrastructure. There are places like this all across the country. Communities and aviation operators are beginning to see what they could become. That's how Direct Aviation takes shape: not by asking people to travel farther or wait longer to catch a flight, but by bringing flight closer to where they live, work and want to go."

Robbie Ladov, General Manager, US Heliports & Vertiports, Skyports Infrastructure stated: "Electra's historic flight today marks a significant milestone for Downtown Skyport and Advanced Air Mobility in NYC, demonstrating how new aircraft technologies can unlock entirely new uses for existing aviation infrastructure. As New York's hub for Advanced Air Mobility, Downtown Skyport is playing a central role in bringing next generation aviation to the city, from electric air taxis and cargo drones to new forms of regional passenger transport. Electra's ultra-short takeoff aircraft shows that Downtown Skyport can connect to destinations well beyond the airport run, carrying more passengers and more cargo over far greater distances. We're excited to partner with Electra today and demonstrate how we can bring faster, more convenient air travel closer to where people live and work in Manhattan."

The market demand for faster, more direct regional travel is already well established. Every day, Americans make more than 35 million road journeys across distances ranging from 50 to 500 miles, including numerous high-demand routes where Direct Aviation could dramatically reduce total travel time. By bringing air services closer to passengers' points of departure and arrival, Electra's model transforms lengthy drives and inefficient short-haul journeys into convenient regional flights, making travel faster, simpler and more accessible. Whether traveling for business, a weekend getaway or everyday mobility, Direct Aviation is designed to help passengers spend less time in transit and more time at their destination.

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The Manhattan demonstration represents the latest milestone in Electra's series of real-world proving flights, highlighting how Ultra Short aircraft can operate from locations inaccessible to conventional fixed-wing airplanes.

Using its EL2 technology demonstrator, Electra has successfully validated these capabilities at a growing number of locations, including Downtown Charleston, Bader Field in central Atlantic City, Watertown International Airport and Snowshoe Mountain Resort, among others.

As part of the FAA's Advanced Air Mobility Integration Pilot Program, the company has also demonstrated helicopter-like instrument flight operations at commercial airports, including Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport, with takeoffs and landings conducted from heliports.

Rather than replacing existing aviation infrastructure, Electra's Ultra Short aircraft is intended to complement it by creating an additional layer of connectivity. The company is collaborating with operators, local communities and public-sector partners to integrate existing sites into a broader Direct Aviation ecosystem, establishing a connected regional air mobility network.

For commercial operators, Ultra Short performance enables air services to be located closer to where people live, work and spend their leisure time. Existing heliports and other compact operating sites can become nodes within a regional network linking major cities, smaller communities and leisure destinations, reducing dependence on large commercial airports for every journey.

For defense users, the same capability provides enhanced operational flexibility by enabling the movement of personnel, equipment and supplies in locations where traditional runway infrastructure is unavailable, compromised or impractical. By leveraging small operating areas closer to mission requirements, Ultra Short aircraft can support more distributed and resilient logistics and mobility operations.

Electra plans to continue expanding its demonstration program across both conventional aviation facilities and new Ultra Short operating locations as development of the EL9 progresses toward certification

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