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Excalibur First Flight - June 24, 2009

Aurora Excalibur UAS Makes First Flight

Manassas, VA, July 20, 2009 – Aurora Flight Sciences Corporation (Aurora) announced today that it has successfully completed the first flight of the Excalibur Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). The vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) turbine hybrid electric unmanned air vehicle is the first of a new class of tactical unmanned combat air vehicles. The first flight took place at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland on June 24, 2009.

“It was a flawless first flight with a crisp takeoff and perfect landing. In flight, the hover stability and heading control performance were excellent,” affirmed Aurora President, John Langford.

Excalibur’s unique configuration enables both VTOL and high-speed flight modes at speeds up to 400 knots; thereby providing the Warfighter with a survivable capability for quick response weapons delivery or logistics resupply from remote, austere forward operating bases or from air cable ships operating in the littorals.

The Excalibur proof-of-concept vehicle combines jet-borne vertical lift with three electric lift fans to provide attitude control and a significant fraction of hover thrust. The fully autonomous vehicle management and flight control systems simplify the operator task allowing operators to focus on mission objectives. Aurora anticipates a series of flying qualities and performance testing to verify low speed operations, transition modes, and high speed flight regimes in the near future.

Mission planning and operator command and control was achieved using Aurora’s portable Ground Control Station (GCS) architecture that features STANAG 4586 compliance and ensures down stream interoperability with the Army’s One System compatible GCS. The Excalibur UAS was developed by Aurora for the US Army Aviation Applied Technology Directorate and the Office of Naval Research.

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About Aurora Flight Sciences

Aurora Flight Sciences designs and builds robotic aircraft and other advanced aerospace vehicles for scientific and military applications. Aurora is headquartered in Manassas, VA and operates production plants in Bridgeport, WV and Columbus, MS and a Research and Development Center in Cambridge, MA. To view recent press releases and more about Aurora please visit our web site at www.aurora.aero.

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