



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No: APR-249
Contact: Patricia Woodside
Director, Public Relations
(703) 396-6304
pwoodside@aurora.aero



Aurora engineers display a test section of a wing designed for a large solar-powered aircraft. The section, built entirely of advanced composite materials and covered with solar cells, represents about 5% of the span of the actual aircraft. It is shown for comparison with the center wing section of the world record holding Daedalus human-powered aircraft.

Aurora Unveils Test Wing for Solar Aircraft

Manassas, VA, March 3, 2010 - Aurora Flight Sciences has completed the fabrication and initial tests of an advanced wing design that could revolutionize solar-powered aircraft.

The test wing has a span of 22 feet and a chord of 15 feet. It is built entirely of advanced composite materials and lightweight plastics. Its upper surface is covered with advanced solar cells, which convert sunlight into electricity that would be used to power the aircraft and its payloads.

“Aurora’s interest in solar-powered aircraft dates from the earliest days of the company,” said Aurora CEO John Langford. “Our very first externally funded study, in 1989, was for a solar-powered version of the Daedalus human-powered aircraft. Today’s designs are for much larger aircraft – literally hundreds of feet in wingspan. The idea of this test panel was to develop and validate designs and manufacturing techniques. Doing this is essential for the accurate planning of any future solar aircraft development program.”

In 2008, Aurora was selected as a contractor by DARPA for Phase 1 of the “Vulture” ultra-long endurance aircraft program. Aurora’s design, called “Odysseus” uses a unique variable geometry design known as the “Z-wing”.

The large solar test panel was privately funded by Aurora as an adjunct to Vulture. In addition to the test panel, Aurora has funded the development and flight test of the SunLight Eagle, a 114 foot wingspan solar UAV which made its first flights in the spring of 2009.

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

[Aurora Flight Sciences Corporation](http://www.aurora.aero)

www.aurora.aero

9950 Wakeman Drive
Manassas, VA 20110-2702
703-369-3633 • Fax 703-369-4514

3000 East Benedum Industrial Drive
Bridgeport, WV 26330-9683
304-842-8100 • Fax 304-842-8116

One Broadway, 12th Floor
Cambridge, MA 02142-1100
617-500-4800 • Fax 617-500-4810

200 Aurora Way
Columbus, MS 39701
662-328-8227 • Fax 662-328-8971

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.