

Advanced Air Mobility

Australian regulator maps out roadmap for AAM and drones

Australia regulator CASA has released their long-term vision and roadmap for drones and AAM vehicles. The roadmap covers four timeframes: 2022-23, 2023-26, 2026-31 and 2031-36, where it envisions the integration of autonomous AAM aircraft.

OUR TAKE

Australia is emerging as one of the hot zones for AAM. With 350 orders, one of the top 10 countries in the world, it is important for the regulators to take a proactive approach to AAM - airspace integration.

AIR full scale prototype eVTOL completes first hover

AIR, an Israeli startup working on personal eVTOLs, completed the first tethered hover of its AIR One full-scale prototype. The company expects to expand the flight envelope during the rest of the year. Deliveries are planned to start in 2024.

OUR TAKE

AIR is targeting the individual consumer segment of the AAM market. While we are not bullish on the size of this segment, we think the company cert approach, under FAA Part 21.17(b), will be a competitive differentiator.

Bristow orders 100 Chaparrals from Elroy Air

One of the largest commercial helicopters operators in the world, Bristow Group, signed an LOI for 100 Chaparral uncrewed VTOL UAVs to fulfill time-sensitive cargo needs for logistics, health care and energy applications without the need for airports.

OUR TAKE

Bristow is emerging as one of most forward looking legacy operators, as the LOI with Elroy Air represents the company's fifth commitment for AAM aircraft, following Electra, Eve Holding, Overair and Vertical Aerospace.

American Airlines converts 50 of its non-firm orders to firm

American Airlines has converted 50 of its 250 non-firm orders to firm, confirming delivery slots and depositing pre-delivery payments. It is the first time that a major airline with AAM non-firm orders has made such a commitment.

OUR TAKE

With almost 10,500 total orders tracked, only 569 are firm, carrying penalties and cash deposits. The commitment from American Airlines could signal the beginning of the conversion of the 77% of the total orders that are non-firm to firm orders.

The Rest of Aerospace

AFRL directed energy weapon work shifts into high gear

Lockheed Martin delivered to the US Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) its LANCE high-energy laser weapon, the smallest laser of its power class. It will be integrated with the Boeing produced pod and the Northrop Grumman beam control into SHIELD, the Self-protect High Energy Laser Demonstrator.

OUR TAKE

The Air Force plans to fly a pod-mounted laser in the coming years with the goal to transition to a program of record to protect high value platforms, like tankers. Eventually, the goal is to develop directed energy offensive weapons, as seen in artist renderings of 6th Gen fighters.