Kaman Selected to Build Cargo UAS Prototype for Marine Corps



The Marine Corps' first two Kaman K-MAX Helicopters arrived at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Saturday, May 7, 2016. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Pfc. George Melendez*

BLOOMFIELD, Conn. – Kaman Air Vehicles, a division of Kaman Corporation, has been selected to build a logistics UAS prototype for the United States Marine Corps, the company said in an Oct. 10 release. Kaman will build a funded military version of its KARGO UAV, a purpose-built autonomous medium-lift logistics vehicle. KARGO UAV carries up to 800 pounds of payload and is designed to operate in austere environments.

The Marine Corps project is being managed by NAVAIR PMA-263 under the Medium Unmanned Logistics Systems – Air (MULS-A) program. Once the prototype is constructed, KARGO UAV will complete a Field User Capability Assessment conducted in an operationally relevant test environment.

Kaman began development of its KARGO UAV last year and flew a scaled demonstrator in Fall 2021 to prove out the concept. A full-scale demonstrator is under construction, with first flight scheduled for later this year. Near Earth Autonomy, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was selected as the autonomy provider on KARGO UAV, and parallel testing is ongoing for the autonomy systems that will be employed on the Marine Corps prototype.

“We have been tracking the need for expeditionary logistics for some time,” said Carroll Lane, president of Kaman’s Precision Products segment. “And we are thrilled to see our focused R&D efforts to provide an affordable, reliable and maintainable logistics vehicle come into alignment with such an important program as MULS-A.” Lane stressed that KARGO UAV development for the U.S. Marines would remain a priority for the foreseeable future.

Built with the Marines’ future operating concept in mind, KARGO UAV offers rugged design optimized for expeditionary employment. Compact form-factor of the system fits in a standard CONEX shipping container and is designed to be unloaded and operated by as few as two people.