Kaman’s KARGO UAV Makes First Flight



From Kaman Air Vehicles

BLOOMFIELD, Conn. – (BUSINESS WIRE)–April 30, 2024–Kaman Corporation proudly announces the significant achievement of the first flight of the full-scale KARGO UAV, a purpose-built, autonomous, expeditionary resupply vehicle. This milestone, which took place in December of 2023, signifies a major accomplishment in the ongoing flight test progression. The development of this medium-lift UAS, initiated in 2021 to address logistics needs for U. S. Marine Corps operations, is now well underway.

“It is difficult to describe the sense of satisfaction one feels when watching an aircraft take flight for the first time, and very few people get the opportunity to participate in something like this,” said Romin Dasmalchi, General Manager

of KARGO UAV. “This team worked hard to get here, and the intensity continues as we look to move from prototyping to production,” he added. KARGO UAV is intended to support the U. S. Military, partners, allies, and commercial customers by providing affordable, reliable, and maintainable logistics support in austere and maritime environments. The design leverages existing high-TRL components so that a suitable system could be deployed as soon as 2026.

Contributions from partners significantly aided the success of the KARGO UAV flight test. Near Earth Autonomy, Kaman’s partner for the autonomy system based in Pittsburgh, PA, provided autonomy features on the KARGO UAV. The two companies had previously collaborated on the K-MAX unmanned system and had showcased an earlier version of the autonomy technology to the Marines in April 2021. The Alaska Center for UAS Integration, part of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute, was key in facilitating KARGO UAV flight test operations.

KARGO UAV is currently competing under the Marines’ Medium Autonomous Resupply Vehicle—Expeditionary Logistics (MARV-EL) program, which is managed by NAVAIR PMA-263 and culminates in a fly-off in July of this year.