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Vertical Aerospace and Near Earth Autonomy partner to equip Valo Aircraft for uncrewed defense and commercial operations

- Strategic partnership supports near-term uncrewed defense operations while creating a roadmap toward increasingly automated commercial passenger services
- Near Earth's autonomy products are designed to integrate natively with Valo's Honeywell Aerospace Anthem avionics, creating a fast, low-risk path to advanced autonomous capability

Vertical Aerospace (“Vertical”) (NYSE: EVTL), a global aerospace and technology company that is pioneering electric aviation, and Near Earth Autonomy (“Near Earth”), a proven provider of autonomous flight systems, today announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a strategic partnership to bring advanced autonomy capability to Valo, expanding the aircraft’s role across defense and commercial applications.

The companies intend to integrate Near Earth’s autonomous flight products with Honeywell Aerospace’s Anthem solution, the next-generation digital cockpit already at the heart of Valo. Because the technologies have been designed to work together, the partnership is expected to provide a faster, lower-risk path to introducing advanced autonomous capability into the aircraft for future defense and commercial missions.

Founded in 2012, Near Earth brings more than a decade of experience developing autonomous flight systems for programmes with the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army and Honeywell Aerospace, such as optionally piloted Black Hawk helicopters and autonomous flight demonstrations on the Leonardo AW139.

Through the partnership, the two companies intend to pursue near-term defense opportunities while also creating a long-term roadmap for increasingly automated commercial operations.

Valo combines this autonomy roadmap with a highly capable aircraft platform. Alongside the all-electric tiltrotor aircraft, Vertical is developing a hybrid-electric variant designed to deliver up to 1,000 miles of range, payloads of up to 1,100 kg over shorter distances, and the low acoustic and thermal signatures increasingly required for defense and special mission operations. Valo offers governments a multi-mission platform, spanning logistics, distributed operations, resupply and other missions.

Using a common aircraft platform across commercial and defense markets shortens development timelines, reduces operating costs and enables capabilities to be delivered faster to customers.

Stuart Simpson, CEO of Vertical Aerospace, said:

“Defense is an increasingly important strategic market for Vertical, and this partnership moves us from ambition to capability. More broadly, it reflects how our industry is evolving. The story is no longer whether electric aircraft can fly. It’s whether companies can build scalable aerospace businesses capable of serving multiple markets.

Valo was designed as a platform from day one. Combining hybrid-electric propulsion, advanced autonomy and our proprietary battery technology allows us to serve commercial operators, governments and defense customers from a common aircraft architecture.

Near Earth is one of the world’s most experienced autonomy providers, with a proven track record across over 12,000 flights. Together, we’re creating a next-generation aircraft platform that is more capable, more adaptable and ready to support defense and commercial missions of the future.”

Dr. Sanjiv Singh, CEO and Co-Founder of Near Earth, said:

"We've spent more than a decade bringing autonomous capabilities to aircraft for some of the world's most challenging missions. Valo provides an exceptional platform for autonomy to enable uncrewed flight. By combining Near Earth's autonomy with Vertical's next-generation aircraft and Honeywell Aerospace's open digital cockpit, we have an opportunity to deliver autonomous capabilities faster, with rapid integration, for both commercial and defense applications."

Bob Buddecke, President and CEO, Electronic Solutions, Honeywell Aerospace, said:

"Anthem was designed from day one as a modular, expandable, and growth-ready architecture providing the building blocks for future applications. The Vertical–Near Earth partnership showcases how advanced aircraft capabilities and autonomy can come together on Anthem's common digital backbone. Honeywell Aerospace is excited to see Anthem enable scalable open architecture in both commercial and defense autonomy applications."

Ahead of the Farnborough International Airshow (20-24 July 2026), the agreement highlights Vertical's strategy of building one of the aerospace industry's strongest technology ecosystems. Alongside Near Earth, the company works with aerospace technology industry leaders including Honeywell Aerospace, Aciturri, Evolito, Hyundai WIA, Astronics, Syensqo and Isoclima to develop the technologies underpinning Valo and create a scalable aerospace platform based on a common architecture.

About Vertical Aerospace

Vertical Aerospace is a global aerospace and technology company pioneering electric aviation. Vertical is creating a safer, cleaner, and quieter way to travel. Valo is a piloted, four-passenger, Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft, with zero operating emissions. Vertical is also developing a hybrid-electric variant, offering increased range and mission flexibility to meet the evolving needs of the advanced air mobility market.

Vertical combines partnerships with leading aerospace companies, including Honeywell Aerospace, Syensqo and Aciturri, with its own proprietary battery and propeller technology to develop the world's most advanced and safest eVTOL.

Vertical has c.1,500 pre-orders of Valo, with customers across four continents, including American Airlines, Avolon, Bristow, GOL and Japan Airlines. Certain customer obligations are expected to be fulfilled via third-party agreements. Headquartered in Bristol, UK, Vertical's experienced leadership team comes from top-tier aerospace and automotive companies such as Rolls-Royce, Airbus, GM, and Leonardo. Together, they have previously certified and supported over 30 different civil and military aircraft and propulsion systems.

About Near Earth Autonomy

Near Earth's technology allows aircraft to autonomously take off, fly, and land safely, with or without GPS. Its solutions enable aerial mobility applications for partners in the commercial and defense sectors. Near Earth bridges the gap between aerospace and robotics with complete systems that improve efficiency, performance, and safety for aircraft ranging from small drones to large helicopters. Learn more at nearearth.aero.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Any express or implied statements contained in this press release that are not statements of historical fact may be deemed to be forward-looking statements, including, without limitation, statements regarding the non-binding Memorandum of Understanding between Vertical and Near Earth Autonomy and its anticipated benefits, the integration of autonomous flight systems with Valo, the design and manufacture of our aircraft and the hybrid-electric variant, certification and the commercialization of our aircraft and our ability to achieve regulatory certification of our aircraft product on any particular timeline or at all, the features and capabilities of the aircraft, business strategy and plans and objectives of management for future operations, including the building and testing of our prototype aircraft on timelines projected, completion of the piloted test programme phases, selection of suppliers, as well as statements that include the words "expect," "intend," "plan," "believe," "project," "forecast," "estimate," "may," "should," "anticipate," "will," "aim," "potential," "continue," "is/are likely to" and similar statements of a future or forward-looking nature. These forward-looking statements reflect our current views with respect to future events and are not a guarantee of future performance. Actual outcomes may differ materially from the information contained in the forward-looking statements as a result of a number of factors, including, without limitation, the important factors discussed under the caption "Risk Factors" in Vertical's Annual Report on Form 20-F filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") on March 24, 2026, as such factors may be updated from time to time in Vertical's other filings with the SEC. Any forward-looking statements contained in this Form 6-K speak only as of the date hereof and accordingly undue reliance should not be placed on such statements. Vertical disclaims any obligation or undertaking to update or revise any forward-looking statements contained in this Form 6-K, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, other than to the extent required by applicable law.

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