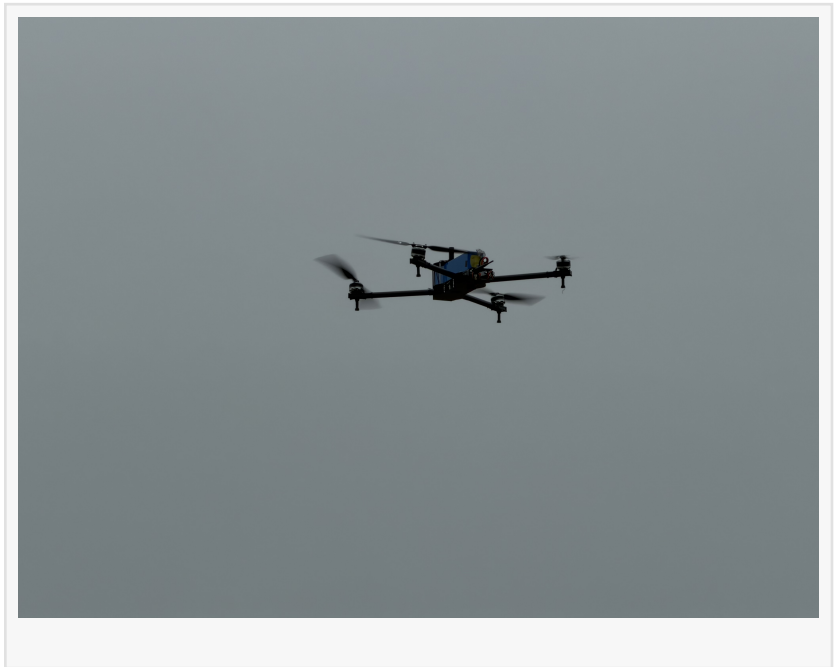


Applied Aeronautics Introduces SkyBeam Heavy Lift Quadrotor Platform

Applied Aeronautics unveils SkyBeam, a modular heavy lift UAS with 60+ minute endurance, 14 lb payload capacity, and open architecture flexibility.

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, May 19, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Applied Aeronautics today announced SkyBeam, a modular heavy lift quadrotor designed for demanding defense, public safety, and commercial operations where endurance, payload flexibility, and rapid deployment matter most.



Designed and manufactured in the United States, SkyBeam is an NDAA-compliant UAS built to support ISR, payload delivery, expeditionary operations, distributed autonomous mission sets, infrastructure inspection, and emergency response missions in challenging environments.

The platform delivers more than 60 minutes of endurance while supporting payloads up to 14 lbs through a swappable payload rail architecture. SkyBeam has demonstrated stable high altitude flight operations in difficult environmental conditions, including flights conducted above 6,500 ft takeoff elevation and 1,000 ft AGL in high winds.

Priced at approximately \$10,000 depending on configuration and payload integration, SkyBeam was designed to deliver meaningful operational capability at a fraction of the cost of traditional heavy lift unmanned systems.

“For more than a decade, Applied Aeronautics has focused on building practical, affordable unmanned systems that can actually scale into real world operations,” said Ryan Johnston, CEO and Co-Founder of Applied Aeronautics. “We applied those same manufacturing and design principles to SkyBeam. The result is a capable heavy lift platform that is modular, repairable in the field, and priced in a way that allows operators to deploy it at scale instead of treating it like a

boutique aerospace asset.”

Johnston added, “We also designed SkyBeam around open architecture avionics compatibility from day one. Operators should not be locked into a single supply chain or forced into long lead times because one component becomes unavailable. Flexibility and resiliency were core design priorities for the platform.”

The aircraft incorporates PX4-based flight controls, extensive onboard edge compute, MAVLink-compatible AAGS ground control integration, and optical flow sensing to support resilient autonomous operations in dynamic and communication degraded environments. The compute stack supports a diverse set of AI-driven applications for autonomy and mission control, with capabilities including GPS-denied navigation, airborne RF survey and direction-finding heat maps, and other mission-specific autonomy workloads.

The system is part of Applied Aeronautics’ growing portfolio of modular unmanned aircraft systems supporting defense, government, public safety, and commercial operators worldwide.

About Applied Aeronautics

Applied Aeronautics is a U.S.-based manufacturer of modular unmanned aircraft systems focused on affordable, operationally proven autonomous platforms. The company designs and manufactures NDAA-compliant Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 UAS platforms for defense, public sector, and commercial operators worldwide.

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