



Vanilla Smashes World Record: >8 days, >12,000 miles, Comms Package

Press release

October 2021

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, CA – Vanilla Unmanned demonstrated **8 days, 50 minutes, and 47 seconds** of continuous flight, breaking the world record for unrefueled, internal combustion endurance of an unmanned aircraft.

Vanilla launched from Rogers Dry Lakebed on Friday, September 24th and was recovered on Saturday, October 2nd having flown **12,200 miles** over Edwards Air Force Base with a communications relay system & ample ballast to accommodate other sensors.

The 8 day flight is a step change from Vanilla's prior record of 5 days and is without comparison to other UAS. The flight was conducted in coordination with Edwards Air Force Base and has been submitted for ratification as an official world record.

The world-record flight was the last in a series of events at Edwards Air Force Base demonstrating Vanilla's unique multi-day, multi-sensor capability. Several sorties over 50 hours each carried two EO/IR cameras, two satellite communications systems for BVLOS operations, and a customer-proprietary radar in addition to the mesh radio system.

"Vanilla has changed the definition of endurance. This is a tactical asset with strategic relevance," says Dr. Dan Edwards, Platform Aerospace CTO. "The notion that tactical UAS must be VTOL and fly for less than 24 hours excludes a disruptive technology that could be fielded today. The value of inexpensive multi-day, multi-sensor coverage is immense."

Unlike larger long endurance UAS, Vanilla is a tactical-scale Group III system that uses an internal-combustion engine for propulsion. Its smaller size enables runway independent launch from forward locations with minimal manning. Unlike solar-powered

high-altitude systems, Vanilla is immediately responsive to operator tasking and flies at tactical altitudes, thereby accommodating smaller and lower cost sensors for the same C5ISR value. Vanilla runs on standard Jet-A fuel, easing logistics concerns during forward operations.

Vanilla's airframe can carry up to 150 lbs of sensor payloads across five internal bays and external mounts, each receiving onboard power and datalink for sensor C2. A VTOL variant is in production with government sponsorship and will take flight in early 2022.

Platform Aerospace would like to acknowledge its employees, industry partners, and government sponsors whose engagement was instrumental in achieving this aviation milestone. Government sponsors include: USAF's 412th Test Wing's Emerging Technologies Combined Test Force (ET-CTF), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), and NASA among others. Industry partners include: AlarisPro, IMSAR, Inmarsat Government, L3Harris WESCAM, Mission Secure, Inc., Progeny, Sechan Electronics, and VX Aerospace. Record submission is through the Academy of Model Aeronautics.

If you are interested in hearing more, please contact Greg Pappianou, Platform Aerospace's Chief Growth Officer (greg.pappianou@platformaero.com).

About Platform Aerospace



Platform Aerospace is a service-disabled veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) dedicated to supporting the warfighter and its customers' success. Platform is AS9100D and ISO 9001:2015 certified, and specializes in manufacturing, aviation modification and prototyping, and cutting-edge aerial ISR products.

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