

German startup Volocopter writes aviation history – yet again First ever public demonstration of an autonomous urban air taxi

Dubai, 25. September 2017 – Today Dubai’s government “Roads and Transport Authority” (RTA) announced the successful completion of the first-ever public flight of an autonomous urban air taxi. This establishes the feasibility and safety of airborne taxis as a means of public transportation. Following weeks of intense safety assessments of vehicle, operations and the test site, German Volocopter GmbH performed the historic flight at 6 pm local time in Dubai during a demonstration event for his highness Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The Volocopter autonomously flew the 500 meters long route in 8 minutes and reached a height of up to 60 meters.

Dubai aims to become the smartest city in the world and plans to handle 25 % of all its passenger travels using autonomous transportation by as early as 2030. “We are very pleased that the RTA has selected us as their partner after throughout testing and screening of our aircraft as well as our development and production processes,” says Florian Reuter, CEO of Volocopter.

After a rigorous approval process covering all relevant security and safety aspects, the RTA had signed a partnership with Volocopter earlier this year to kick-off the autonomous urban air taxi project. During the assessment, the RTA was advised by aviation expert consulting firm JDA, ensuring that all parties and steps of this project adhere to international state-of-the-art aviation safety standards. Furthermore, this project of the RTA and Volocopter was fully embraced by the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) and Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) thus laying the groundwork for the future regulatory framework in Dubai.

The Volocopter is a fully electrically powered multicopter featuring 18 rotors and is designed to transport people by flight in city areas. Its fully redundant power trains and an intelligent autonomous control system offer maximum reliability “made in Germany”. This technology has now been tested under the extreme climatic conditions of Dubai.

“Since the inception of Volocopter, we have worked towards making flying an option for everyone and on re-inventing mobility in urban areas,” states Florian Reuters. Volocopter sees its vision of urban air taxis confirmed. For years, the company has developed not only the technology for quiet, safe and emission-free flying. They are pioneers with regards to close cooperation with aviation authorities and the definition of standards for infrastructure and reliable operation. “We have now publicly proven the safety, compliance, and relevance of Volocopter in the urban environment in one of the most forward-thinking cities of the world. Others will follow soon,” says Alexander Zosel, founder of Volocopter. “A new era of public transport has begun today.”

About Volocopter

Volocopter GmbH is the global leader in the development of vertically launching, fully electrical multicopters for the transport of people and of heavy lifting cargo drones. The technical platform is extremely flexible and permits piloted, remote controlled and fully autonomous flight. In addition, the unique design offers a huge degree of safety based on the high redundancy of all critical components. The company’s objective is to realise every human’s dream of flying and to resolve the increasing mobility issues of megacities. 2011 the company wrote aviation history with the world’s first manned flight with a purely electrical multicopter. Since then the young team has set new milestones: In 2016 Volocopter was the worldwide first multicopter granted provisional licensing, in this case by the German aviation authority. In 2017 the aviation start-up entered into an agreement with RTA Dubai over the global premiere of an autonomously flying air taxi. In the meantime, the founders Stephan Wolf and Alexander Zosel have gathered an excellent team of experienced managers like CEO Florian Reuter and CTO Jan-Hendrik Boelens.