

Volocopter gets safety nod in push for air taxis of the future

August 23 2019, by Nancy Cohen



Credit: Volocopter

How far off are we from hopping on and off air taxis as a familiar local mode of transport? Eyes this week were fixed on one company aggressively keeping up its bit to open commercial routes and bring this type of mobility to life.

Volocopter on Wednesday presented its latest air [taxi](#) design, dubbed

VoloCity. The machine can accommodate two people and hand luggage.

Ben Sampson, *Aerospace Testing International*, noted that this is actually the fourth electrical take-off and landing aircraft (eVTOL) iteration but "the first that meets the new European Aviation Safety Agency standards."

"The EASA international certification baseline published in July 2019 (EASA SC-VTOL-01) requires [air taxis](#) to be as safe as airliners. The VoloCity is developed to live up to these standards," said the company's web site.

Popular Mechanics saw the news as a sign that we could be getting a step closer to the flying taxi.

Volocopter is a German company, and made the news back in 2011 with a [manned flight](#) of an electrically powered vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. The company also got headlines in its public flight performances in [Dubai](#) in 2017 and during CES last year.

Its to-do list is driven by a missing part of the challenge. In addition to getting the [flying machine](#) to work successfully, the work ahead is to build out the environment that will have these air taxis operating realtime. As the company news release said, it was about "building up the operational environment such as the physical take-off and landing infrastructure and integrating into air traffic management systems of interested cities."

David Grossman talked about this in *Popular Mechanics*. "Even with a working VoloCity, there's still the infrastructure of [flying](#) taxis to build out."



Credit: Volocopter

Moving forward, the company news release reported that "Volocopter is working with global players like Fraport, the operator of Frankfurt International Airport (FRA) to optimize passenger and ground procedures and align regulations with the relevant authorities."

Ben Sampson in *Aerospace Testing International*: "Volocopter is also developing a network of terminals, so-called "VoloPorts" and is working on ways to integrate its air taxis into air traffic management systems of cities. The company, which plans to run the aircraft and [infrastructure](#) for fleets of Volocopters, is partnering with companies such as Frankfurt Airport operator Fraport to achieve this."

Earlier this year, *Tech.eu* interviewed Volocopter's Alex Zosel, who was asked how would the air copters integrate into everyday city life.

"Volocopter's biggest focus right now is building up an infrastructure for mobility in the third dimension...The first Volocopter [routes](#) will likely connect main transportation hubs, such as airports and business parks, to city centers. For example, we currently have a project with Fraport AG, which is one of the biggest airport managers in the world. The idea is to link up our air taxi service with trains, buses and commercial airlines and provide a connection to and from Frankfurt Airport. There will be a lot of changes in mobility in cities over the next few years and we want to be part of building a new ecosystem for air taxi providers."

Woodrow Bellamy III, editor-in-chief of *Avionics*: The company has plans for the new design's first test flight to occur later this year in Singapore. Bellamy wrote about the taxi features, which include 18 total rotors with aerodynamic rotor beams and a stabilizer designed to increase stability in flight and additional [lift](#).

The company news release noted technical and safety features that included redundancy in all critical systems, a low noise signature and "rigid commitment to the inner-city mission."

The commercial variant will have the calculated range up to 35 km (21.7 miles). The VoloCity can fly at a speed of 110 kilometers per hour (68 miles per hour).

If a little less than 22 miles does not seem to be very far, one can be reminded that this is designed to be a local means of getting around, as an on-demand city air taxi. "But Volocopter hopes the VoloCity doesn't need to hit top speeds or have extended range, at least at first," said Grossman.

More information: press.volocopter.com/index.php...ir-mobility-aircraft

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