

Singapore launches first drone delivery service

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The use of drones is part of Singapore's drive to embrace technological innovation

Singapore's first drone delivery service has begun by taking vitamins to a ship, with its operator saying Wednesday the devices are crucial in

reducing human contact during the coronavirus pandemic.

The [use of drones](#) is part of the city-state's drive to embrace [technological innovation](#), as well as an effort to tackle a manpower shortage in a country of just 5.7 million.

The [drone](#) delivered two kilograms (4.4 pounds) of vitamins to the ship owned by Eastern Pacific Shipping, its first paying customer, said F-drones, the company behind the service.

The flight on April 19 lasted seven minutes and was over a distance of 2.7 kilometres (1.7 miles), it said.

"Besides being efficient, [delivery](#) drones can also reduce unnecessary human contact amid the COVID-19 pandemic," said F-drones chief executive Nicolas Ang.

F-drones said it plans to develop drones that can deliver 100 kilos over distances of 100 kilometres to ships and offshore platforms by the second half of 2021.

Deliveries offshore are currently being done by small boats and helicopters but the company said the use of its unmanned vehicles will save up to 80 percent of the cost and is more environmentally friendly.

Singapore's civil aviation authority has got behind the use of drones, and is working with industry players as it seeks to shape regulation for the sector.

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