

UPS explores eTVOLs, part helicopter and part plane

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In this Dec. 19, 2018 file photo, packages await delivery inside of a UPS truck in Baltimore. UPS is buying 10 electric vertical aircraft from Beta Technologies as it looks to get items to small and mid-size markets faster. In an announcement Wednesday, April 7, 2021 Atlanta delivery company said it will test the eVTOLs for use in its Express Air delivery network. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

UPS is buying 10 electric vertical aircraft as it attempts to improve delivery times in small and mid-size markets.

eVTOLs are a cross between a helicopter and a fixed-wing airplane, meaning they can fly at higher speeds, as well as ascend and descend vertically.

In an announcement Wednesday, the Atlanta delivery company said it will test the eVTOLs for use in its Express Air delivery network. The [program](#) is been overseen by its Flight Forward division, which is also exploring drone [delivery](#).

UPS expects to begin receiving the planes in 2024. There's an option to buy up to 150 [aircraft](#).

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The beta aircraft have a 1,400-pound cargo capacity, so they'll be able to transport time-sensitive deliveries more quickly than if the packages were being delivered via small fixed-wing planes that require an airstrip.

The aircraft have a 250-mile range and cruising speed of up to 170 miles per hour. It is hoped that the aircraft will allow UPS to plan a series of short routes, or one long route, on a single charge. The planes can charge in an hour or less and produce zero operational emissions.

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