



ELECTRIC AIRCRAFT 2014-2024: TRENDS, PROJECTS, FORECASTS

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Electric aircraft serve the need for reduced noise, air and ground pollution and reduced global warming. They provide freedom from foreign sources of oil. They make new things possible such as helicopters that can carry out a controlled landing after engineering failures thanks to electric backup and leisure aircraft getting all their "fuel" from solar cells on the hanger. They expand the market for aircraft, while modernising the industry and opening up applications for many new electrical components and systems, including structural components, printed electronics and smart skin.

Electrically driven aircraft are arriving from the bottom up in the form of hang gliders and sailplanes and from the top down in the form of large hybrid helicopters and airliners that have electric nosewheels making them electric vehicles when on the ground. Near-silent take-off and landing of feeder aircraft is being considered and small aircraft that get airborne thanks to wheel motors and the personal aircraft in your garden will be possible. The technologies are changing radically with supercapacitors potentially replacing or partly replacing batteries, plus new power components, motors, a wide variety of range extenders including fuel cells and multiple energy harvesting - all explained in this unique report, which also looks closely at issues such as safety.

It is too early for detailed forecasts of this new industry but the report gives some numbers and many milestones over the coming decade including company profiles and intentions from interviews and recent conference presentations.

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