ROBOT FLYING AMBULANCE MAKES FIRST SOLO FLIGHT

News / Manufacturer

An autonomous flying ambulance has successfully completed its first solo test flight, offering a potential solution for challenging search and rescue missions. Completing such missions in rough terrain or combat zones can be tricky, with helicopters currently offering the best transportation option in most cases. However, these vehicles need clear areas to land, and in the case of war zones, helicopters tend to attract enemy fire.

Now an Israeli company has completed the test flight for an automated flying vehicle, dubbed the Cormorant, that could one day go where helicopters cannot. Last month, the company flew the Cormorant on the craft's first solo flight over real terrain. The vehicle is designed to eventually carry people or equipment without a human pilot on board, 'Live Science' reported.

Rather than using propellers or rotors to fly, the Cormorant uses ducted fans that are effectively shielded rotors, which means the aircraft does not need to worry about bumping into a wall and damaging the rotors. Another set of fans propels the vehicle forward. The vehicle is effectively a decision-making system that can figure out what to do if there is a problem in the inputs from the sensors, the company, Urban Aeronautics, said. If the Cormorant detects a potential issue, the drone's robotic brain can decide whether to go home, land and wait for more instructions, or try a different flight path.

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