



VERTICAL AEROSPACE ADVANCES JAPAN COMMERCIALISATION WITH MARUBENI VIA ELECTRIC AIR TAXI ROUTES

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Vertical Aerospace announces a major acceleration of its commercial roadmap in Japan, working in partnership with Marubeni Corporation. Together, the companies are advancing plans for a future Advanced Air Mobility route network across the country, marking a significant step toward the commercial deployment of electric air taxi services in Japan. Ahead of this, the companies are progressing plans for piloted demonstration flights in the Osaka Bay area, targeted for 2026.

Stuart Simpson, CEO of Vertical Aerospace, commented: “Japan combines strong regulatory leadership, advanced infrastructure and trusted industrial partners, making it one of the most promising markets globally for Advanced Air Mobility. Our partnership with Marubeni and engagement with JCAB demonstrate our careful, step-by-step approach to developing real-world Valo operations, grounded in safety, certification and public acceptance.”

Toru Okazaki, Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, Aerospace & Mobility Division, Marubeni Corporation, stated: “We are pleased to take this next step with Vertical Aerospace as we progress toward demonstration flying in Japan. By advancing route development in the Kansai region, we see significant opportunities to build the operating infrastructure and ecosystem required to accelerate AAM adoption.”

Route network development: the Kansai region and beyond

Vertical is working closely with Marubeni and other partners to develop a scalable AAM route network in Japan. One flagship corridor under evaluation in the Kansai region could see Valo reduce travel times by almost 80% compared with ground transport, while operating quietly with zero-emissions.

Uses cases being progressed include:

- Premium Tourism and Major Events: Rapid access from major urban centres to scenic destinations such as Osaka to Awaji Island, Shodoshima, and air taxi services to support transportation for international exhibitions and large-scale events
- Airport shuttles and integrated connections: Providing fast, first- and last-mile links to major transport hubs and airports, e.g. Izumisano to Osaka and Kobe
- Essential Services: Supporting time-critical medical and logistics transport e.g. emergency response coverage in Osaka-Hyogo districts

From Expo to Commercial Operation

The announcement builds on the strong momentum from the 2025 Osaka World Expo, which attracted more than 29 million visitors, where attendees had the opportunity to engage with Valo, Vertical’s upcoming certification aircraft, through an immersive cabin experience with simulated commercial flight routes across the Kansai region.

Regulatory and commercial maturity

Valo will be Vertical’s certification aircraft, designed to fly up to 160 km at speeds of up to 240 km/h with zero operating emissions, and engineered to meet airliner-level safety standards. Vertical is also developing a hybrid-electric variant, offering increased range and mission flexibility.

Key milestones underpinning Vertical’s commercial pathway in Japan include:

- Regulatory validation: The Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) accepted Vertical’s application into the type validation programme in 2023, providing a clear certification roadmap for entry into service. Vertical is targeting airliner-level safety type certification in 2028 for Valo with the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which will be followed by JCAB validation.
- Commercial commitment: Marubeni has formalised its commitment through pre-delivery slot reservation payments for the first 25 out of 200 Valo aircraft, reflecting growing confidence in the programme.
- Ecosystem partnerships: Vertical has been engaged in discussions with partners in the region to develop the operating infrastructure as well as aftermarket support in Japan.

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