

**SkyDrive Signs Australia's First eVTOL Agreement with Gold Coast Helitours**  
- Partnership targets 2028 launch of scenic flights on the Gold Coast with up to five aircraft, backed by plans for dedicated vertiports and future inter-city networks -

**TOYOTA CITY, Japan, August 18, 2026-** SkyDrive Inc. ("SkyDrive"), a leading compact eVTOL (\*1) aircraft manufacturer based in Japan, today announced the signing of a Letter of Intent (LOI) with Gold Coast Helitours, a premier helicopter operator based in the Gold Coast, Australia.

This milestone agreement represents SkyDrive's first LOI with an Australian operator regarding the introduction of its aircraft. The parties have reached a basic agreement on the terms for purchasing up to five "SKYDRIVE" eVTOL aircraft (Model SD-05) which encompasses specific pricing and a delivery schedule (targeting two aircraft in 2028 and three in 2029). Furthermore, the proposed route for sightseeing services has been mutually agreed upon.



LOI Signing Ceremony in Gold Coast

From left: Scott Menzies, Chief Pilot & Director of Gold Coast Helitours,  
Keisuke Yasukochi, Global Intelligence Officer of SkyDrive

## ■ Background to Partnership

Driven by a growing global demand for sustainable transit options and exceptionally quiet mobility experiences, the Gold Coast is spearheading Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) initiatives. As a top-tier resort destination in Australia with a well-established helicopter sightseeing sector, the region aims to integrate these innovative air mobility systems into practical use.

Aligning with this vision, Gold Coast Helitours, an operator with a long-standing record of safe and highly reliable helicopter flights, sought to leverage the unique advantages of eco-friendly, ultra-quiet eVTOL aircraft to transform air travel and build a new tourism ecosystem in the region.

## ■ Proposed Scenic Flight Route

SkyDrive and Gold Coast Helitours plan to launch Australia's first eVTOL sightseeing service in 2028, operating out of the existing heliport located at Marina Mirage (\*2), Main Beach.

- **Takeoff and Landing Point:** Marina Mirage, Main Beach
- **Flight Overview:** An approximate 10-minute scenic loop flying over the Broadwater, Southport, and Surfers Paradise.



Image of "SKYDRIVE" flying over Gold Coast Beach

## ■ Infrastructure and Future Network Expansion

Leading up to the targeted commercial launch in 2028, SkyDrive and Gold Coast Helitours will work closely to secure necessary type certification from regulatory authorities. As a foundational step for operations, the partners will also drive the development of a dedicated vertiport and a maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) facility at Southport Airfield.

Looking ahead, the long-term vision is to utilize Southport Airfield as a central maintenance hub to build a broader eVTOL aircraft network. This network aims to

seamlessly connect the Gold Coast city center, major commercial districts, and the Gold Coast Airport.



## ■ Management Comments

### **Scott Menzies, Chief Pilot and Director, Gold Coast Helitours**

“For many years, we have provided our guests with breathtaking views of the Gold Coast from the sky. By adding incredibly quiet and environmentally friendly eVTOL aircraft to our fleet, we can offer an unprecedented new era of air travel. This beautiful coastline is the perfect stage for such a launch.”

### **Tomohiro Fukuzawa, Founder & CEO, SkyDrive Inc.**

“Gold Coast Helitours is an outstanding partner with a proven history of safe operations and a clear, forward-looking vision for next-generation mobility. We are profoundly honored to announce our first aircraft introduction agreement in Australia alongside an operator with such industry-leading ambition.”

### **About Gold Coast Helitours**

Based at a dedicated heliport at Marina Mirage, Main Beach, Gold Coast Helitours is a premier helicopter operator representing the Gold Coast. Boasting a diverse fleet including the Airbus H125 and a highly experienced staff with over 30 years in the industry, the company provides a wide array of aviation services. These range from sightseeing flights and charters to corporate transport, aerial filming, fire and rescue, and specialized cargo transport. Maintaining a flawless "zero-accident" safety record since its establishment, Gold Coast Helitours prioritizes unmatched safety and service quality to revitalize regional tourism and address diverse community needs.

For more information: <https://www.goldcoasthelitours.com.au/>

### **About SkyDrive Inc.**

SkyDrive is a Japanese compact eVTOL company aiming “to take the lead in the once-in-a-century mobility revolution”. The company began testing eVTOL prototypes in 2014 prior to official incorporation in 2018. Under its future vision for urban transportation, flying in eVTOLs will become a regular part of city life. In 2019, SkyDrive became the first company to fly a crewed eVTOL in Japan. In 2025, the company

successfully showcased the eVTOL "SKYDRIVE", the company's first eVTOL product, with demonstration flights at the Osaka Expo witnessed by thousands of visitors over a one-month period. SkyDrive began production of "SKYDRIVE" in March 2024 at a plant owned by Suzuki Motor Corporation, SkyDrive's official production partner. SkyDrive has been working with civil aviation authorities in Japan and the US to obtain certification for "SKYDRIVE", with the aim of launching the aircraft into service in 2028. SkyDrive is headquartered in Toyota, Aichi Prefecture, and led by CEO Tomohiro Fukuzawa, an engineer and entrepreneur.

For more information, please visit: <https://skydrive.co.jp/en/>

Editor's Note:

(\*1) "eVTOL" is an abbreviation for electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing. As the name suggests, eVTOL aircraft can take off and land without a runway. eVTOLs are powered by electricity and incorporate advanced, automatic, flight control technology.

(\*2) Marina Mirage, Main Beach is currently undergoing a \$500 million redevelopment by Makris Group into a luxury waterfront destination. The transformation will feature the 126-key Marina Mirage Gold Coast, a Luxury Collection Resort by Marriott International, alongside 38 exclusive residences, a 78-berth superyacht marina with helipad access, and extensive dining, retail, and wellness precincts. Completion is scheduled for 2029.

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