

SKYDRIVE COMPLETES FIRST DEMO FLIGHTS IN TOKYO

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SkyDrive announced successful conclusion of a series of demo flights of its “SKYDRIVE”, conducted over the five days between February 24 (Tue) and February 28 (Sat), 2026. The flights, which were organized in collaboration with Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd., and Kanematsu Corporation and took place at Tokyo Big Sight, a major event venue on Tokyo Bay, represent the first-ever public flights of SkyDrive’s aircraft in Tokyo. These flights were conducted as part of the “Project for Developing Business Models for eVTOL Services in Tokyo”, a project of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government announced in June 2025.

The goal of this flight program was to evaluate the integrated ground and flight operations needed to support the future commercialization of urban eVTOL transport. With this in mind, SkyDrive and its supporting partners assessed the full operational sequence from pre-flight preparation through to departure, cruising, landing and returning the aircraft to the hangar. With a combined focus on the aircraft and the terminal facilities that future passengers will require, the project broke new ground as the first such comprehensive feasibility study of future eVTOL operations to take place in Japan.

Terminal infrastructure was built to allow members of the public to test and provide feedback on the various pre-boarding procedures including facial recognition-enabled passenger check-in and passenger security screening. SkyDrive is grateful for the cooperation of the many members of the public who helped us collect the data we need to ensure the smooth running of future passenger

flights. With their cooperation, the reality of commercially viable, convenient urban eVTOL travel can begin to take shape.

Making the case for urban eVTOL

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has developed a roadmap for the introduction of eVTOL infrastructure and services and is actively supporting the development of the industry, recognizing the potential for eVTOL aircraft to improve resident quality of life by combatting traffic congestion and radically transforming the movement of people and goods. Smoother transportation and logistics enhances the appeal of the city, making it a more attractive destination for tourists and a more comfortable home for residents.

Since 2022, Mitsubishi Estate Co., Ltd. and Kanematsu Corporation have been validating various business models and conducting technical verifications to assess the feasibility of various passenger eVTOL services. These studies, which are designed to pave the way for the use of air taxis in and around Tokyo, include potential routes between the rooftop of the Shin-Marunouchi Building in central Tokyo and destinations along Tokyo Bay.

Flying these routes with a conventional helicopter reveals the potential for a significant reduction in travel time to below one-third that of road travel, while also revealing the importance of ensuring time savings in the pre- and post-travel procedures, including the passenger boarding process and access to and from vertiports. Additionally, these preliminary studies confirmed the unique appeal of the scenery on these routes, the strong likely demand for scenic flights, and the core importance of central business districts and train stations as candidate vertiport locations.

Following these investigations and feasibility studies, SkyDrive joined the project in 2025, its fourth year. As described above, SkyDrive, together with the project partners, was able to use this series of demo flights to assess both aircraft and terminal operations. In collaboration with UK-based Skyports, a global leader in vertiport infrastructure, we sought out volunteer members of the public who could experience part of the eVTOL passenger journey, including facial recognition-enabled check-in and security screening, as part of our efforts to confirm the effectiveness of passenger terminal operations. This feedback from this activity allowed SkyDrive to gain a deeper understanding of the operational and convenience requirements that will be necessary to ensure successful commercialization.

SkyDrive aircraft



Winged eVTOL aircraft



Demo flight details

The demo flight series took place on February 24-28, 2026, operating from a dedicated take-off and landing site in the outdoor temporary parking lot by the East Wing of Tokyo Big Sight, an iconic Tokyo landmark. The demo flight featured the SKYDRIVE (SkyDrive Model SD-05), the same model flown by SkyDrive at the Expo 2025 event in Osaka and also at the nearby OsakaKo Vertiport. As the flight route is situated close to the busy flight paths approaching Tokyo's Haneda Airport, the demo flights also served as a further opportunity to confirm the low acoustic footprint of the SKYDRIVE.

The aircraft's flight path started from within the limited space available inside the Tokyo Big Sight grounds before extending out over the sea. The SKYDRIVE's ability to take off and land in relatively confined spaces is a huge advantage in ensuring safe operations from rooftops and other compact vertiports. Safe operation from small vertiports increases the number of potentially usable vertiport sites, allowing future services to approach door-to-door connectivity even in city neighbourhoods where local characteristics make the construction of large vertiports difficult or impossible.

Watching the SKYDRIVE take off from a lot allowed visitors to catch a glimpse of a near future in which eVTOL travel is just an everyday part of the fabric of city life. Whether it be a rooftop, shopping mall carpark, or the public square in front of a local train station, a compact multicopter will have a wider variety of takeoff and landing options, leading to more flexible, scalable operations.

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