Sikorsky Converts BLACK HAWK® Into U-Hawk™, A Battle-Ready Autonomous UAS

S-70UAS™ U-Hawk™ helicopter is configured to lead and resupply air assault missions



By removing the cockpit, seats and crew stations, the Sikorsky S-70UAS™ U-Hawk™ helicopter becomes the first fully autonomous Black Hawk helicopter. Photo courtesy, Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company.

Washington, Oct. 13, 2025 — From concept to reality in 10 months, Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company (NYSE: LMT), has transformed a UH-60L Black Hawk® helicopter into the S-70UAS™ U-Hawk™, a versatile autonomous unmanned aircraft system (UAS) that has 25% more cargo space than a typical Black Hawk. Sikorsky replaced the cockpit section with actuated clamshell doors and ramp, and swapped conventional flight controls with a third-generation, low-cost, fly-by-wire system integrated with MATRIX™ autonomy technology.

View the video.

The S-70UAS U-Hawk aircraft on display at this week's Association of the United States Army exposition shows a larger cabin space to:

- Accept longer cargo, such as missiles,
- Drive on/off an uncrewed ground vehicle,
- Roll-on/off supplies,
- Launch swarms of reconnaissance or strike drones, and
- Carry internal fuel tanks for increased range or extended time on station.

"Sikorsky is innovating a 21st century solution by converting UH-60L Black Hawks into a fully autonomous utility platform," said Rich Benton, Sikorsky vice president and general manager. "We developed this prototype from concept to reality in under a year, and the modifications made to transform this crewed Black Hawk into a multi-mission payload UAS can be replicated at scale quickly and affordably. The U-Hawk continues the Black Hawk legacy of being the world's premier utility aircraft and opens the door to new capabilities as a UAS."

Redesign and structural modification of the UH-60L aircraft into its uncrewed U-Hawk configuration is led by rapid prototyping group Sikorsky Innovations. First flight is expected in 2026.

U-Hawk-enabled missions
By eliminating the cockpit and internal components, the U-Hawk has 25% more cargo space than the UH-60L Black Hawk.

Forward loading and additional useable cabin space of the U-Hawk aircraft now offers the flexibility to accommodate oversized loads up to the same maximum gross weight.

- Air-ground team — Drive on/off an uncrewed ground vehicle, such as the HDT Hunter Wolf 6x6 UGV.
- Cargo — Transport up to four Joint Modular Intermodal Containers (vs. two today).
- Missile transport — Carry a HIMARS pod of six rockets, or two Naval Strike Missiles.
- Launched effects — Deploy launched effects carrying sensors/munitions from quivers secured to the cabin.
- Endurance — Self-deploy over 1600nm or loiter for up to 14 hours without refueling.

Like a UH-60L aircraft, a U-Hawk variant retains the ability to load cargo from the side door, and externally lift 9,000 pounds (4,080 kg) using its cargo hook.

Operators – not pilots – fly U-Hawks
A tablet gives an operator full command of the U-Hawk aircraft from start-up to shut down.

At the touch of a button, the two clamshell doors open and a ramp lowers to allow easy cargo loading or drive-on capability. To prepare for flight, the automated sequence is reversed.

Once loaded, an operator inputs mission goals via the tablet. The MATRIX autonomy system automatically generates a flight plan, relying on cameras, sensors and algorithms to help navigate the U-Hawk aircraft safely to its destination.

Affordable utility UAS
By removing the cockpit, all seats and crew stations from the aircraft, the U-Hawk helicopter becomes the first fully autonomous Black Hawk utility helicopter.

“The U-Hawk offers a cost-effective utility UAS by leveraging commonality with the existing UH-60 fleet, and its uncrewed nature reduces both operating and maintenance costs,” said Igor Cherepinsky, Sikorsky Innovations director. “We focused on efficiencies in the retrofit by designing and manufacturing vehicle management computers, actuation components and airframe modifications. We will incorporate those efficiencies into future modifications and manufacturing for our family of UAS products.”

For more information, visit https://lockheedmartin.com/uhawk.

About Lockheed Martin
Lockheed Martin is a global defense technology company driving innovation and advancing scientific discovery. Our all-domain mission solutions and 21st Century Security® vision accelerate the delivery of transformative technologies to ensure those we serve always stay ahead of ready. More information at Lockheedmartin.com.

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