

Unmanned Air Vehicles: Miami police plans urban test of Honeywell's micro-UAV

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Police in Miami, Florida want to find out whether a small unmanned air vehicle able to hover and stare can help law enforcement in urban areas.

To that end, Miami-Dade Police Department plans a four- to six-month evaluation of [Honeywell's ducted-fan Micro Air Vehicle \(MAV\)](#).

The gasoline-powered gMAV has just received an experimental airworthiness certificate from the US Federal Aviation Administration, clearing the way for the ground-breaking experiment. Approval was granted following a demonstration flight for the FAA at a remote site in Laguna, New Mexico.

The wingless gMAV can take off and land vertically, transition to high-speed flight and hover and stare using electro-optical/infrared sensors. Miami-Dade is buying one gMAV and leasing a second for the FAA-sanctioned technology demonstration, says Vaughn Fulton, Honeywell's small UAS programme manager.

The police department will operate the UAVs, and helicopter pilots from its aviation unit have been trained to fly the gMAV. "The demonstration will be in urban terrain, involving real tactical operations," he says.

The 8.2kg (18lb) gMAV is Honeywell's second version of the man-portable UAV. Compared with the original tMAV developed for the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the gMAV has a larger outside diameter housing twice the fuel and providing an endurance exceeding 55min at sea level.

Military gMAVs have been used in Iraq to detect improvised explosive devices. The basic UAV has fixed sensors and Honeywell is developing a follow-on version with gimballed payload. The company is also working on diesel-powered dMAV, which it expects to fly in 2008. Another version is in development for the US Army's Future Combat Systems programme.

Honeywell has begun low-rate initial production of MAVs on a new line in Albuquerque, New Mexico, sized to manufacture up to 100 vehicles a month. "We expect several large contracts in 2008," says Fulton.

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