

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> COMPLETES FIRST SUCCESSFUL MANUAL SHIPBOARD UAV OPERATIONS**

During an August 2000 demonstration for the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) East, Schiebel's CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> UAV System became the first vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) UAV to take off and land manually from a ship, demonstrating its suitability for Naval and Coast Guard use.

Deploying from the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Valiant* off the coast of Florida, CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> completed five vertical take-offs and landings without incident. Whereas only a single take-off and landing of another UAV had been previously accomplished using UCARS (UAV Common Automatic Recovery System), CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> was operated entirely with its own on-board systems, in up to 21 knots of wind over deck.

Manual take-off and landing capability allowed CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> to be flown from the USCGC *Valiant*, a 210-foot cutter, with no modifications to the ship and only minimal preparation. This capability allows CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> to fly from any ship with a suitable landing area without the need for more costly automated recovery systems, hardware and software modifications.

CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> is a rugged, highly maneuverable VTOL UAV, suited for a wide variety of military and civil applications, both over land and sea. It is a standardized platform on which numerous sensors may be mounted to suit customer requirements. The Aerial Vehicle which took part in the demonstration was an off-the shelf system, the only additions being an improved software package and an automatically inflated emergency flotation system.

Following take-off, the Aerial Vehicle was switched to autonomous flight mode, flying through a series of pre-programmed waypoints. The flight path was programmed to keep the CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> on a course relative to the ship's position (i.e. a racetrack search pattern a fixed distance ahead of a convoy), as well as to fly independently of the ship's position (i.e. search and rescue missions).

CAMCOPTER's ability to maintain positions and patterns relative to moving platforms is also applicable to land-based applications. The software improvements will remain standard on the system, allowing the air vehicle to be controlled from within a moving vehicle. This will allow CAMCOPTER<sup>®</sup> to fly, for example, a fixed distance ahead of a moving ground convoy, searching for ambushes or landmines.

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