# Flying car prototype grounded at Osaka Expo after motor detachment incident



At the 2025 World Exposition in Osaka, Japan, an incident involving a “flying car” prototype has raised safety concerns, resulting in the suspension of all flight demonstrations of the vehicle. During a demonstration held in April, the Hexa electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, developed by American company Lift Aircraft Inc. in partnership with Japanese trading firm Marubeni Corp., experienced a mechanical failure when one of its motor propellers detached and fell to the ground. Fortunately, the crew reported no injuries, and the aircraft managed to land safely.

This event occurred at the Osaka Expo site on Yumeshima, an artificial island in Osaka Bay, which is hosting this global event with a focus on innovative technologies and futuristic concepts. The Hexa eVTOL was showcased as part of ambitious plans to introduce “flying taxis” for visitors, providing aerial transportation services around the Expo’s expansive grounds. However, following the incident, event organisers promptly halted all further flight demonstrations involving the Hexa vehicle as investigations into the cause of the failure commenced.

The Hexa’s technical malfunction has underscored the substantial challenges faced in integrating eVTOL vehicles into real-world applications, particularly the stringent safety standards required for public aviation operations. The incident highlights the complexities surrounding the regulation, engineering, and operational protocols for such emerging urban air mobility solutions. As a result, the initial vision, which included plans for four different operators to weave low-altitude flight routes over the Expo area, has been delayed due to unresolved safety considerations.

Despite this setback, the Osaka Expo continues to attract significant visitor interest, with over one million people attending since its opening on 13 April. The event features a range of technological exhibitions, cultural displays, and prototype experiences aimed at showcasing advancements across various fields. While the grounded status of the Hexa flight programme is a tangible obstacle, it has not diminished the Expo’s overall appeal as a platform for technological progress.

Industry analysts note that while eVTOLs represent promising innovation for reducing urban congestion and enabling rapid aerial transport, safety remains paramount. Comparable companies such as Joby Aviation and Volocopter have also undergone extensive testing phases to meet rigorous regulatory requirements before broader commercial services become viable. Regulatory bodies like the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the United States and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) continue to develop certification frameworks specific to eVTOL vehicles.

At present, the precise cause of the Hexa’s motor propeller detachment remains under investigation, with possibilities including mechanical failure or maintenance issues yet to be confirmed. The suspension of flight activities at the Expo is intended to allow for a thorough examination and to ensure any future demonstrations comply fully with safety mandates.

This incident reflects the broader trajectory of the urban air mobility sector, which is projected by market researchers to grow into a multi-billion-dollar industry by 2030, provided that regulatory, technological, and consumer acceptance hurdles are successfully navigated. Meanwhile, stakeholders and observers worldwide are watching closely, recognising that while the prospect of flying cars captivates public imagination, practical progress hinges on meticulous engineering and stringent safety oversight.

As the Hexa team and Expo officials work together to address the problem, the skyline above Osaka remains clear, poised for the future return of these cutting-edge aerial vehicles once these challenges are resolved. The event stands as a vivid case study in balancing pioneering innovation with the imperatives of aviation safety in the emerging era of flying taxis.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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