



AFWERX

AFWERX to discuss emerging aircraft technologies at AUVSI Xponential 2023 convention

By Tim Tresslar
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WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFRL) — [AFWERX](#) will highlight emerging aircraft technologies during the Association for Unmanned Vehicles Systems International Xponential 2023 convention May 8-11, 2023, at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver.

This year's theme is "Building the Blueprint for Autonomy," and attendees can expect to see AFWERX displays and learn about several innovative technology programs.

"The Agility Prime program aims to enhance the advanced air mobility and electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) sector by exploring airspace modernization and integration for emerging vehicle types," said Lt. Col. John Tekell, Agility Prime lead. "Additionally, the program seeks to share the valuable lessons learned with interagency and service partners."

On May 8, 2023, Darshan Divakaran, AFWERX head of airspace innovation and Prime partnerships, will participate in the panel "If You Build It, They Will Come: Infrastructure for Advanced Mobility" from 9:30-10:20 a.m.

Lt. Col. Bryan Ralston, Autonomy Prime lead, will discuss the "Future of Autonomy in DOD" May 9 from 3-3:45 p.m. Ralston and other panelists will talk about Defense Department advanced autonomous systems projects as well as the opportunities and challenges they present.

"As the battlespace becomes akin to a four-dimensional chess board, it's important to leverage emerging technologies, such as autonomy, to aid in decision-making and create asymmetric advantages for our military," Ralston said. "It is imperative that America is the leader in this space."



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Sterling Alley, AFWERX technology transition lead, will join the panel “Skies For All: A Universal Approach To Future Airspace Integration” May 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The group will examine ways to safely, securely and efficiently open the skies up to delivery drones, regional shuttles and remotely piloted cargo aircraft.

Divakaran will take part in the AUVSI Defense Track discussion “DOD Efforts for Airspace Modernization” May 10 at 2:50 p.m. He will discuss Agility Prime’s efforts to advance airspace modernization as well as hybrid and eVTOL technology.

In addition to speakers, AFWERX will host a [booth](#) where its representatives can interact with companies and other stakeholders about topics such as autonomy approaches and power sources for next-generation aircraft systems.

The AFWERX booth will also feature a 1/10-scale model of Chaparral, an eVTOL manufactured by Elroy Air. The San Francisco-based aviation firm was awarded a \$1.7 million Tactical Funding Increase contract in addition to its existing Phase III contract with the Air Force in 2021. The unmanned Chaparral can carry between 300 to 500 pounds in cargo up to 300 miles.

Last year’s XPONENTIAL drew more than 6,500 attendees and featured more than 500 vendors as well as more than 200 panels, sessions and workshops.

About AFRL

The Air Force Research Laboratory is the primary scientific research and development center for the Department of the Air Force. AFRL plays an integral role in leading the discovery, development, and integration of affordable warfighting technologies for our air, space, and cyberspace force. With a workforce of more than 11,500 across nine technology areas and 40 other operations across the globe, AFRL provides a diverse portfolio of science and technology ranging from fundamental to advanced research and technology development. For more information, visit: www.afresearchlab.com.



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About AFWERX

AFWERX is an AFRL Directorate that connects innovators across government, industry and academia. Through innovation and collaboration with our nation's top subject-matter experts, AFWERX harnesses the power of ingenuity of internal talent while expanding technology, talent and transition partnerships for rapid and affordable commercial and military capability. Additional information is available at www.afwerx.com.

About Prime

The AFWERX Prime programs accelerate the development of key dual-use technology sectors that advance US national security and competitiveness, fielding rapid and affordable capability within a 2-4 year timeframe. Prime programs collaborate across academia, industry, investors, interagency, international, acquisition, laboratory, and warfighter communities. Learn more at <https://afwerx.com/prime>.

About Agility Prime

The Air Force launched Agility Prime, a non-traditional program seeking to accelerate the commercial market for advanced air mobility vehicles. Leveraging unique testing resources and revenue generating government use cases for distributed logistics and disaster response, the government plans to mitigate current commercial market and regulatory risks. Additional information is available at: <https://afwerx.com/agility-prime>.