

Marine Corps Successfully Demonstrates Link-16 in Third XQ-58A Valkyrie Test Flight



From Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – The Marine Corps' XQ-58A Valkyrie successfully completed its third test flight on Sept. 20, 2024, at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. This flight was conducted in partnership with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, and industry partners.

The test demonstrated newly added Link-16 capabilities for the uncrewed collaborative combat aircraft prototype, marking the first time the Department of Defense controlled an air vehicle using offboard expeditionary methods. Initial results indicate that the prototype met threshold requirements for autonomously exchanging relevant tactical information. These Link-16 capabilities significantly enhance the Marine Air-Ground Task Force's ability to conduct integrated and joint operations, contributing to the Marine Corps' mission to deter conflict and, when necessary, defeat enemies in complex and evolving scenarios.

This successful test was conducted in preparation for Emerald Flag 2024, a multiservice and multi-domain training exercise scheduled for October. The exercise will incorporate technology and focus on the efficiency of joint warfare. The XQ-58A has proven itself ready for this capstone event, allowing the Marine Corps to demonstrate cooperative kill chain closure between manned and unmanned strike platforms for the first time in a large-force exercise.