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Swiss Department of Defence Becomes Centaur Launch Customer

The Swiss Department of Defence has become the first customer for the Centaur Optionally-Piloted Aircraft (OPA).

armasuisse, an official procurement agency of the Swiss Department of Defence with its own Flight Test Center, will use the Centaur as a flying test bed for new sensors and Sense and Avoid equipment required to operate Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) in the entire National Air Space (NAS).

Centaur is a four-place, twin-engine aircraft that is both exceptionally efficient and extremely quiet. Centaur burns less than 40 pounds of jet fuel per hour, and can stay airborne for up to a day at a time. It has extensive noise suppression, making the aircraft virtually undetectable at altitudes more than 3000 feet above the ground.

Aurora's industry team for Centaur includes Diamond Aircraft, Rockwell Collins, and Textron/AAI. Development of Centaur began in 2009. Test flights began in 2010, with the first fully automatic takeoffs and landings starting in 2011. The first production Centaur is scheduled for delivery to Switzerland in 2012.

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