



Business Aviation

UAE plans to establish green aviation centre to reduce carbon emissions

Project will seek to promote clean energy and support research and development in sustainable aviation



Deepthi Nair
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The UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority and Hong Kong-based green air mobility tech company Volar Air Mobility have signed an interim agreement to develop the Emirates' first [green aviation technology centre](#) as the country pushes ahead with plans to [boost environmental sustainability](#).

The centre aims to promote [clean energy](#), support research and development in sustainable aviation technologies, and foster collaboration among international stakeholders, regulators and innovators, the UAE's aviation regulator said on Saturday.

The UAE's vision to become a world leader in green technology and reduce carbon emissions in the aviation sector, the statement added.

"This reflects our commitment to advancing sustainable aviation and supporting the UAE's national strategy to reduce carbon emissions," Saif Al Suwaidi, director general of the GCAA, said.

"The green aviation hub will play a pivotal role in developing cutting-edge solutions for a greener future."

Green transport is a focus in the UAE's [sustainability goals](#). In 2021, the UAE unveiled its [Net Zero 2050 Strategic Initiative](#), a Dh600 billion (\$163.37 billion) plan to invest in clean and renewable energy sources over the next three decades.

It was the first Gulf country to commit to achieving net-zero emissions by that date.

The UAE, a major aviation centre, aims to supply 1 per cent of fuel to national airlines with domestically produced sustainable aviation fuel by 2031, in line with government plans to decarbonise the sector.

Under its General Policy for Sustainable Aviation Fuel, the country aims to position itself as a regional hub for low-carbon aviation fuel and boost its production of SAF to as much as 700 million litres annually.

It also plans to create a national regulatory framework and explore policies to support the long-term operation of SAF facilities in the UAE.

Last October, Abu Dhabi's clean energy company Masdar and US aerospace company Boeing teamed up to help advance the SAF industry in the UAE and around the world.

The companies said they would collaborate in the development and adoption of policies, including accounting principles for SAF, expected to help the industry overcome geographical barriers as its use continues to increase.

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“Our mission is to accelerate the adoption of green aviation technologies, and this collaboration will create a centre of excellence for sustainable air mobility in the UAE,” Henry Hooi, chairman of Volar Air Mobility, said.

In April, the GCAA officially granted operational approval for the UAE's inaugural vertiport, as the country develops its advanced air mobility sector.

The UAE aviation regulator had introduced the national regulation on vertiports last March.

Several of Abu Dhabi's government entities signed an initial agreement with electric aircraft maker Joby Aviation in April as the emirate seeks to bring in air taxi services that will cut journey time.

[California-based Joby Aviation](#) signed initial agreements with Abu Dhabi's Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), Department of Economic Development and Department of Culture and Tourism.

The company also has an agreement with Dubai's Road and Transport Authority to launch passenger [air taxi services](#) in the emirate, which Joby expects to start as early as next year.

Abu Dhabi has also pledged to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to support Archer Aviation's air taxi services in the emirate, ahead of the company's plans to start operations by next year.

RTA signs agreement with Joby Aviation to launch air taxi services – in pictures

The Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development announced the Smart and Autonomous Vehicles Industry cluster in October 2023 to develop smart and autonomous vehicles for air, land and sea use.

The UAE has been leading the region when it comes to developing advanced air mobility, as part of its broader goals for sustainable and smart transport.

Attracting electric vertical take-off and landing companies is also part of its wider goal to develop advanced domestic manufacturing and boost foreign investment.

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