

September 2026 – Aerospace Events and Litigation Review

A monthly review of significant events and litigation developments in the aviation and space industries, for the aerospace business and legal communities, our clients, and friends.

Contacts: **Smith T. Johnston, Esq. (Editor)**, 404.256.7410, sjohnston@mflaw.com |
Caroline Henriksen, Esq., 404.256.7409, chenriksen@mflaw.com |
Arthur J. Park, Esq., 404.845.1955, apark@mflaw.com |



Contents

Aviation, Commercial	1
Aviation, Military	8
Aerospace, Department of Justice & State Action	11
Space.....	12
Space, Human Spaceflight	14

Aviation, Commercial

Sept. 2 – 33rd World Aerobatic Championships wrap up this week in Mason City, Iowa: 35 pilots representing nine countries are soaring through the skies of North Iowa this week as the Mason City Municipal Airport hosts the 33rd World Aerobatic Championships. Aerobatics is a high-flying, Olympic-scale sport that pushes aircraft to their absolute limits with precise, gravity-defying loops, rolls, and spins. Bringing the global event to Iowa was no small feat. In the competition's more than 60-year history, the world championship has only been held in the United States five times. [KTTC].

Sept. 3 – Accident Cessna T206H Stationair TC N919CW: The aircraft reportedly crashed into the north face of the mountain. An aircraft was reported missing by the Denver ATC shortly after the fire started. A public information officer for the San Miguel Sheriff's Office (SMSO), confirmed late Thursday night that "a Cessna 206 single-engine aircraft with two male occupants crashed this afternoon (Thursday) on the north side of Dolores Peak." [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 3 – Accident Lancair Evolution N305PV: A Lancair Evolution plane crashed in a wooded area between the Tampa Executive Airport (KVDF) and U.S. 301. The aircraft had just departed from runway 05 at KVDF. The pilot held a CPL with SES and SEL along with an Instrument Rating. The CPL was issued in 2016. Flying under BasicMed. Two fatalities are reported. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 3 – NTSB: Passenger Safely Lands King Air C90A after Pilot's Cardiac Arrest: A passenger with no pilot certificate landed a Beechcraft King Air C90A safely at Meadows Field Airport (KBFL) in Bakersfield, California, after the 78-year-old pilot lost consciousness during a flight on Oct. 4, 2024, according to a newly released NTSB final report. Guided by air traffic control, the passenger safely brought the turboprop twin to a straight-in landing following the pilot's in-flight cardiac arrest. The pilot died from the medical event. [AviationInternationalNews].

Sept. 4 – Boeing OT Suit Says Incentive Pay Was Omitted From Rates: Boeing shorted its workers in Washington state by failing to factor in bonuses and other nondiscretionary compensation when calculating overtime and sick leave payments, according to a proposed class action that the company removed to federal court Thursday. [Law360].

The information contained herein is for informative purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice; nor does such information in any way reflect the personal or professional views of the firm and/or the editors. While the editors attempt to include only accurate and multiple-source-verified information herein, no claims to accuracy are made and the information is subject to change, retraction, and/or error. The information contained herein is not to be used for business purposes and may be subject to original copyright and no claims of ownership are asserted. To learn more about the legal services offered at Mozley, Finlayson, & Loggins, LLP, please visit www.mflaw.com.

Sept. 5 – Accident Grumman American AA-5 Traveler N6510L: A Grumman American AA-5 Traveler, N6510L, was destroyed when it crashed atop the bluff of the San Joaquin River immediately after takeoff from Sierra Sky Airport (E79), Fresno, California. The pilot and two passengers were killed, and one passenger was seriously injured. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 5 – Accident Cirrus SR22 N65KB: A light plane crashed under unknown circumstances in the Mount McDougall area, near Canmore, AB, Canada. The pilot and a passenger died in the crash. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 5 – Accident Piper PA-28-181 Archer II N7653F: A Piper PA-28-181 Archer II, N7653F, was destroyed when it crashed under unknown circumstances in a wooded area near Ludlow, Massachusetts. The two occupants onboard were fatally injured. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 6 – Indonesia cancels hundreds of flights as Anak Krakatau volcano erupts: A volcano erupted in Indonesia on Sunday, prompting the cancellation of all flights at Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport and disrupting other domestic airports as about 170,000 passengers were stranded by ash drifting across western parts of the country. The volcanic island of Anak Krakatau, located in Indonesia's Sunda Strait between the main Java and Sumatra islands, had shown signs of activity since Friday before erupting for 30 seconds at 3:53 a.m. Sunday and for 16 seconds about three hours later, Indonesia's Geological Agency said. Closed-circuit camera footage showed lava flares from the volcano. No casualties were reported and no evacuation order was issued. The nearest settlement is more than 16 kilometers (10 miles) away, but authorities warned residents and visitors to stay at least 3 kilometers (2 miles) from the active crater. Volcanic ash spread across parts of Jakarta and Lampung province on Sumatra's southern tip, Indonesia's Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation said. AirNav Indonesia closed airspace around Soekarno-Hatta and Halim Perdanakusuma airports in Jakarta, as well as six other airports, including Radin Inten II Airport in Lampung, because of volcanic ash. [AP]; [Hype/Aviation].

Sept. 6 – At least 5 dead after Amazon cargo plane crashed off runway at Miami airport: An Amazon cargo plane barreled off a runway at Miami International Airport on Sunday, killing at least five people and injuring five others as it struck vehicles and was engulfed in flames, authorities said. The aircraft overran the runway around 2 p.m. after arriving from San Juan, Puerto Rico, and plowed across a road used by warehouse workers and other businesses that surround the airport. Five people were killed, three critically injured and two others hospitalized with less severe injuries, Miami-Dade County officials told a news conference. [AP]; [Hype/Aviation].

Sept. 6 – Passengers duct-tape man as American flight diverts to BWI: Passengers aboard an American Airlines flight helped restrain a disruptive man to his first-class seat using duct tape, after he allegedly assaulted other travelers and bit a retired police

officer. American Airlines Flight 618 was traveling from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) to Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) on September 3, 2026, when the disturbance erupted. The flight diverted to Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI), where police boarded the aircraft and arrested the man. According to one of the passengers, the man was seated two rows behind him in first class aboard the Boeing 737-800 when he became belligerent and began directing racial and homophobic slurs at people aboard the flight. The passenger told CNN that a flight attendant initially tried to control the situation, but the man became increasingly agitated. He allegedly struck the passenger seated next to him and then hit a woman who attempted to intervene. [AeroTime].

Sept. 6 – Accident Robin DR400/180R Remorqueur D-ENGB: A Robin DR400/180R Remorqueur crashed left of runway 35 at Weinheim/Bergstrasse Airfield (EDGZ) during the Weinheim aviation club's summer festival, Germany. The event was called off. Two occupants were killed in the crash, while two suffered serious injuries. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 6 – Accident Pilatus B4-PC11AF OE-5716: A Pilatus B4-PC11AF crashed into a canal when approaching runway 31 at Sterzing-Vipiteno Airfield, Sterzing, Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy. The pilot perished and the glider was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 7 – Two killed in Beechcraft Bonanza crash near Brisbane: Two people were killed when a light aircraft crashed onto a rural property at Stockleigh, in the Logan local government area south of Brisbane, Australia, on September 7, 2026, starting a grass fire. According to the Queensland Police Service, emergency services were called to a property on Musch Road at about 11:10 local time following reports that a light plane had come down. Officers found two occupants – believed to be a 56-year-old man and a 23-year-old woman, according to police sources – from the Brisbane suburb of Ascot. Both were declared dead at the scene. [...] The aircraft was a 1979-built Beechcraft A36 Bonanza registered VH-MPT, according to the Aviation Safety Network. Australian aircraft register data list its serial number as E-1456 and Telford Aviation as its registration holder and registered operator. The A36 is a single-engine piston aircraft. [AeroTime].

Sept. 7 – Accident Mooney M20F Executive 21 N9546M: A Mooney M20F Executive 21 lost engine power immediately after takeoff from runway 36 at Space Coast Regional Airport (TIX/KTIX), Titusville, Florida, and crashed near the airport. The sole pilot perished and the aircraft was destroyed by fire. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 7 – Drones Ground Arkansas Firefighting Aircraft: Two unauthorized drones interfered with aerial firefighting operations last week as crews battled a wildfire in Garland County, Arkansas. Regine Skelton of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division told KARK-TV that the drones limited the agency's air response. The department issued similar guidance in August, warning that unauthorized drones can ground firefighting aircraft, slow emergency response and create airspace hazards. No details have been released about the drones, their operators or how long the latest interruptions lasted. Drone interference has also affected wildfire operations elsewhere in the U.S. The Interior Department recorded 53 unauthorized drone incursions during wildfires in 2025, 44 of which directly interfered with or threatened aerial firefighting operations. As

of May, the agency had documented four additional incursions in 2026. [AvWeb].

Sept. 7 – Two killed after Cessna crashes at San Diego airport: Two people died when a small Cessna Skyhawk aircraft crashed and caught fire on a runway at Montgomery-Gibbs Executive Airport (MYF) in San Diego, on the evening of September 7, 2026. According to a report by the San Diego Police Department, the crash was reported at approximately 17:20 local time. The incident occurred on the Labor Day holiday, when most airport shops and businesses were closed. [AeroTime].

Sept. 8 – Accident MBB Bo 105CBS-5 9M-LLF: An MBB Bo 105CBS-5 helicopter, 9M-LLF, experienced an engine fire approaching Long Lellang (Sarawak), Malaysia, trailing smoke, and crashed short of runway 04 at Long Lellang STOLport (WBGF), Long Lellang. The five occupants perished and the helicopter was destroyed by fire. The helicopter was reportedly operating on the Miri–Ba Lai–Long Siut–Long Lellang route, doing medical visits. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 8 – Body Found in Search for Missing Bahamas Plane: One body has been recovered during the search for a Piper PA-34 carrying four members of a Florida family that disappeared Monday on a flight from the Bahamas to South Florida. NBC 6 reported Tuesday that the body was located by a relative participating in a civilian search organized by the family. The person has not been publicly identified. The aircraft departed Great Harbour Cay before disappearing near Andros Island. According to a family statement, last known contact came at about 11:04 a.m. near the western side of the island. Bahamas police said air traffic control lost contact about 13 miles west of Andros. Occupants included pilot Mario Lamar Sr., 80; his wife, Lili Lamar, 79; and their grandchildren Sofia Sosa, 28, and Christian Sosa, 22. Lamar's niece, Silvi Larrieu, told Local 10 her uncle had more than 40 years of flying experience. [AVweb].

Sept. 9 – Vella v. MACD Helicopters, Inc., Docket No. 25-2722 (9th Cir. 2026): A helicopter owned and operated by the Huntington Beach Police Department crashed in 2022, resulting in the death of Officer Nicholas Vella and serious injury to Officer RJ Garwood. The plaintiffs alleged that the crash was caused by a defect in the helicopter's stability augmentation system. The helicopter, a model MD520N, was manufactured by The Boeing Company in 1998 and delivered to the police department that same year. It had a seating capacity of five and was type and airworthiness certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The plaintiffs initially brought their claims for strict products liability, breach of warranties, and negligence in California state court. The case was removed to the United States District Court for the Central District of California on the basis of diversity jurisdiction. The defendants, including The Boeing Company and MacD Helicopters, moved to dismiss, arguing that the claims were barred by the General Aviation Revitalization Act's (GARA) 18-year statute of repose. The plaintiffs contended that GARA did not apply to "public aircraft" such as those owned by governmental entities. The district court rejected the plaintiffs' arguments, found that the helicopter met GARA's definition of "general aviation aircraft," and granted the motions to dismiss. The court certified its decision for interlocutory appeal and stayed further proceedings. The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit considered whether GARA's statute of repose applied to the police helicopter. The court held that

the statute's definition of "general aviation aircraft" includes government-owned aircraft, as long as the statutory requirements are met. The panel expressly rejected the argument that the Federal Aviation Act's "public aircraft" definition is incorporated into GARA and concluded that GARA contains no "public aircraft" exception. The Ninth Circuit affirmed the district court's dismissal of the lawsuit. [Justia].

Sept. 10 – Accident Cessna 402B N401NA: A Cessna 402B, N401NA, (registration was taped over), crashed during an illegal flight near Agua Boa, Mato Grosso, Brazil. All three occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed by fire. Registration N401NA was cancelled 21 December 2022 (registration PR-PMU was reserved in January 2020, but not taken up so far). [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 10 – Middle Georgia State University receives \$3.48M to expand aviation training: Middle Georgia State University will use \$3.48 million in federal funding to expand aviation training programs at its Eastman Campus, according to the university. The funding was congressionally approved with support from Georgia U.S. Sens. Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock and awarded by the U.S. Department of Education for MGA's proposal to expand its FAA-certified flight, maintenance and air traffic control programs. MGA says the funding will be used to purchase a new 360-degree air traffic control simulator, aircraft engines, specialized maintenance trainers and updated tools and workstations. The funding also includes \$1 million for a student pilot fuel fund designed to help stabilize the cost of required flight training. [41NBC].

Sept. 11 – Nicholas Air Loses Appeal in Whistleblower Case: A federal appeals court on Thursday rejected Nicholas Air's attempt to overturn a Department of Labor whistleblower ruling in favor of former captain-in-training Colin DeBuse. The case was formally brought by Corr Flight S., which employs personnel for Nicholas Air, and asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit to set aside the department's final decision under federal aviation whistleblower law. The court ruling denied the petition for review. [AVweb].

Sept. 12 – Wirestrike Accident Cessna 172K Skyhawk RA-0794G: A Cessna 172K Skyhawk collided with a television tower and crashed into the vegetable garden of a private residential property in Shemordan, Tatarstan. The instructor and student pilot perished and the aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 12 – Accident gyroplane: Police and emergency services were called to a pastoral property following reports of a gyroplane crash near Broken Hill, SA, Australia. The sole pilot, a 51-year-old local man, died at the scene. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 12 – US Rep. Tom Tiffany says he sustained minor injuries after plane makes emergency landing: Representative Tom Tiffany, the Republican nominee for Wisconsin governor, said he and his pilot swam to safety after a [Beechcraft Bonanza] in which they were traveling lost power and made an emergency water landing on a lake in central Wisconsin, sustaining minor injuries. "While returning home from the La Crosse County Lincoln Day Dinner tonight, the plane I was traveling in lost power as we approached the Wausau Downtown Airport. The pilot made an emergency water landing in Lake Wausau," he posted on X in the early hours of Sunday. [Reuters]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 13 – Accident Bi-plane: A bi-plane [possibly an B&F Technik FK-12 Comet 83AUC] crashed under unknown circumstances in La Londe-les-Maures, Var, France. Both occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 14 – Accident Cessna F172P Skyhawk II (Reims) PH-WMA: A Cessna F172P Skyhawk II (Reims), PH-WMA, crashed under unknown circumstances in a field north of Gerderath, near Erkelenz, Heinsberg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The three occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed. According to official German news Tagesschau, Deutsche Flugsicherung reported the flight had been in contact with Flight Information Service shortly before the accident because of adverse weather on the route. The aircraft had departed Hilversum Airfield (EHHV) at 10:24 LT. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 15 – \$1.1 Billion in Airport Infrastructure Grants To Fund Upgrades across U.S.: A \$1.1 billion round of Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants will fund runway reconstruction, terminal upgrades, and new vehicle tracking technology at U.S. airports. The 280 grants announced by the FAA on Monday cover projects in 46 states and three territories, including \$10.9 million to install vehicle movement area transmitters on 3,000 vehicles at 61 airports, intended to give air traffic controllers better visibility into vehicle activity on runways and taxiways. Other funded projects include \$43 million across 12 airports for noise mitigation, \$30.7 million for runway reconstruction at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (KATL), \$18.9 million for a terminal expansion at Shreveport Regional Airport (KSHV) in Louisiana, \$11.5 million for a new contract tower at Mankato Regional Airport (KMKT) in Minnesota, and \$2 million for a terminal expansion at McAllen International Airport (KMFE) in Texas that includes baggage claim, restroom, nursing station, and ticketing counter improvements. [AIN].

Sept. 15 – Accident Van's RV-4 N469TW: Neighbors of a 62-year-old pilot say they are heartbroken after he died in a plane crash on Tuesday. Local 3 News spoke with residents near the plane crash that took the life of 62-year-old Douglas Emge of DeKalb County, Alabama. [Local3News]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 15 – Accident Cirrus SR22T GTS G7+ carbon N44T: A Cirrus SR22T GS G7+ carbon, N44T, crashed on a mountain slope in the Fluhalp area, near Leukerbad, Leuk, Valais, Switzerland. The three occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 15 – Accident Cessna A185F Skywagon N4358Q: The pilot and passenger of a small plane operated by a Chugiak air taxi service died in a crash Tuesday near a moose camp in Western Alaska on Tuesday, authorities say. The Cessna 185 Skywagon crashed about 30 miles southeast of Aniak, according to information from the Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board. The plane crashed after taking off from moose camp, Alaska State Troopers said in an online statement Wednesday. Killed were 34-year-old pilot Nicholas Peters, of Eagle River, and 50-year-old Missouri resident John "Jack" Ervin. [AnchorageDailyNews]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 16 – Three killed, two injured after NBC NewsChopper 4 helicopter crashes while covering LA collision: An NBC Los Angeles NewsChopper 4 Eurocopter AS350 B2 crashed in Chatsworth while covering an earlier fatal bus collision, killing an aerial journalist,

the pilot and a person on the ground. Two other people were hospitalized after the helicopter descended onto a commercial property. [Hype/Aviation]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 17 – Boost for airBaltic as US court grants access to financing: The US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York has approved airBaltic to access \$162 million (€140 million) in financing and continue operating under Chapter 11 proceedings. On September 16, 2026, the Latvian carrier said it was granted permission by the court to access debtor-in-possession (DIP) financing so it can keep operating while its bankruptcy case is underway. airBaltic can now immediately access the initial tranche of \$162 million of the previously announced \$405 million (€350 million) financing facility. The airline voluntarily filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in the US on September 14, 2026. [AeroTime].

Sept. 17 – Honeywell makes hydrogen-electric propulsion breakthrough: A Honeywell Aerospace led alliance of 18 European companies has made a significant breakthrough developing a megawatt-class hydrogen-electric propulsion system for future aircraft. On September 17, 2026, Honeywell Aerospace said under Project NEWBORN, the consortium had successfully integrated individual subsystems into a functional hydrogen power source capable of generating and supplying electrical energy for an aircraft. The next step will be an integrated ground demonstration of the complete propulsion system, in which the hydrogen power source and batteries will supply electricity to an electric motor driving an aircraft propeller. To test the hydrogen fuel-cell power source, Honeywell Aerospace developed a dedicated platform to simulate a range of functions of an actual aircraft. Based at a research center near Prague, it includes its own power source, working fluid distribution systems, electrical systems, a control room, safety equipment and heat rejection systems. Companies involved in Project NEWBORN, which launched in 2023, include PowerCell, Fraunhofer, Test-Fuchs, Siemens Industry Software, KU Leuven, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and CIRA. [AeroTime]; [FlightGlobal].

Sept. 17 – Beamed Power Could Keep Solar Aircraft Aloft in Winter: The UK's Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) has awarded a £15.7 million (\$21.2 million) contract to Prismatic, a BAE Systems subsidiary, to test whether a ground-based energy beam can keep a solar-powered stratospheric aircraft flying around the clock—including through dark northern hemisphere winters. Announced on September 15, the contract calls for Prismatic to use its PHASA-35 uncrewed aircraft as the flight demonstrator. Solar-powered high-altitude pseudosatellites such as PHASA-35 recharge their batteries during daylight to stay aloft overnight—a limitation at higher latitudes during winter, when days are short. Prismatic contends that beaming power to the aircraft from the ground would eliminate that constraint, enabling continuous flight for months at a time. [AIN].

Sept. 17 – Accident Weatherly 620B N20003: Lee County, South Carolina, first responders are on the scene of a plane crash that happened Thursday morning, officials say. The Lee County Sheriff's Office said the crash occurred near Red Top Road in the county's Lynchburg area. Details were still limited at the time, but officials said the aircraft involved was a crop duster. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said the crash happened around 8:15 a.m. and

involved a Weatherly 620B, which crashed into a field. The sheriff's office said there was one person in the aircraft and that person is deceased. [News19-WLTX19+]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 17 – Accident Ultraleger Mistral 582 PU-SBC: A pilot was killed in the crash of a aircraft on a plantation in Macambira, Brazil. The aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 18 – Accident Cessna 172N Skyhawk 5Y-OBM: A Cessna 172N Skyhawk crashed under unknown circumstances near Kipeto, Kajiado, Kenya. The instructor and student pilot perished and the aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 18 – Accident light plane: A light plane crashed under unknown circumstances in Rokovci, Croatia. The pilot perished and the aircraft was destroyed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 18 – Joby Flies Autonomous Caravan Coast-to-Coast: Joby Aviation says a converted Cessna Caravan equipped with its autonomous flight system has completed a 3,199-mile trip across the U.S. without any control inputs from a safety pilot onboard the aircraft. According to a company release, the eastbound flight began at Buchanan Field Airport in Concord, California, and ended at Dare County Regional Airport in North Carolina's Outer Banks. [AVweb]; [Flying]; [WSJ].

Sept. 18 – Accident Comp Air 7SL PP-XHV: A Comp Air 7SL crashed during a testflight near Poxoréu, Mato Grosso, Brazil. Both occupants perished and the aircraft was destroyed by fire. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 18 – Accident Cessna 172P Skyhawk C-GPTO: Took off from Regina at 2:36AM heading southeast towards Carlyle and Steinbach (South) Airport, MB, Canada. Last communication at 3:26AM. In the late afternoon plane found crashed in Moose Mountain Provincial Park by aerial search and rescue. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 18 – Mid-air collision Accident Schleicher ASW-24 N94CG: A Schleicher ASW-24, N94CG, and a Schempp-Hirth Ventus 2b, N61XC, were involved in a mid-air collision near Plateau Sky Ranch Airport (1F2), Edinburg, New York. The pilot of the Ventus was fatally injured, the pilot of the ASW-24 was not injured. The FAA reported that the N61XC's left wing struck the nose of N94CG in-flight. The Ventus crashed out of control in a wooded area while the ASW-24 landed at 1F2. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 20 – EASA releases annual aviation safety figures: 116 deaths in 2025: The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and Eurostat, the European Union's statistical agency, have published the 2025 Annual Safety Review, which provides the number of fatalities and injuries in accidents which occurred either within EU's territory or on EU-registered aircraft. According to the EASA report, a total of 116 people died in 2025 as a result of aviation accidents. The vast majority of these, 79, died in accidents involving fixed-wing powered aircraft. Helicopters and sailplanes accounted for 18 deaths each, while one person died in a balloon accident. This figure represents an increase over the 91 deaths reported in 2024. [AeroTime].

Sept. 20 – Accident Aerospatiale AS332L1 Super Puma N332N: Aerospatiale AS332L1 Super Puma helicopter N332N was destroyed when it crashed while on a water bucket firefighting flight, near Mariposa, California. Both pilots were killed. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 20 – Accident Britten-Norman BN-2A-6 Islander YV1996: A Britten-Norman BN-2A-6 Islander crashed a few seconds after takeoff from runway 11 at Santa Elena de Uairén Airport (SNV/SVSE), Venezuela, and a post-impact fire erupted. The pilot and a mechanic perished and the aircraft was destroyed by fire. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 21 – Telecommunications failures disrupt air traffic control across the US Northeast and UK: A failed FAA telecommunications circuit, severed backup fiber and a separate NATS connectivity problem disrupted air traffic across major US Northeast airports and parts of Scottish airspace. The incidents grounded or delayed inbound flights and renewed questions about the resilience and redundancy of air traffic control networks. [Hype/Aviation]; [AP]; [AVweb].

Sept. 21 – Honeywell Aerospace Sues Electric Car Cos. Over Patents: Electric carmakers Lucid and Rivian are facing lawsuits accusing them of infringing automotive patents owned by Honeywell International spinoff Honeywell Aerospace. [Law360].

Sept. 21 – Two Killed In Yosemite Firefighting Helicopter Accident: Two pilots were killed Sunday when a firefighting helicopter crashed in Yosemite National Park while supporting suppression efforts on the Dome Fire. The Eurocopter AS332L1 operated by Precision went down shortly before 3 p.m. while conducting water bucket drops southeast of Ostrander Lake. The FAA and NTSB are investigating the accident. A National Park Service update issued Sunday morning said a temperature inversion was expected to trap smoke until late morning or early afternoon and that hazy skies would impair distant views. Winds were forecast from the southwest at 6 to 10 mph, with gusts around 15 mph on exposed ridges. The NPS had warned a day earlier that poor visibility from smoke was delaying flight operations, although it is not known at this time whether visibility played a role in the accident. [AVweb]; [Hype/Aviation].

Sept. 21 – Accident Beechcraft B95 Travel Air N529RB: A Beechcraft B95 Travel Air crashed into the Pacific Ocean, seven minutes after takeoff from Newport Municipal Airport (KONP), Newport, Oregon. ADS-B data shows the aircraft circled an area about 2 nm offshore, at low altitude, for about five minutes until it crashed into the water. After 12 hours search operations of the United States Coast Guard were suspended. No trace of the airplane or the pilot were found. The pilot is deemed to have died in the crash. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 21 – Accident Bell 430 PP-MGR: A Bell 430 crashed near Vacas Gordas, Urubici, Santa Catarina, Brazil. The wreckage of the destroyed helicopter was located next day around 12:30 LT and sadly no survivors reported. Onboard were singer Rick of the musical duo Rick & Renner and four other occupants. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 22 – GAO Flags FAA Jamming, Spoofing Gaps: The FAA needs stronger protections against aviation cybersecurity threats including spoofing and jamming, according to a new GAO report released Monday. The Government Accountability Office found incomplete risk assessments for several spectrum-dependent systems and said the FAA lacks a defined real-time capability to detect all spectrum-related threats. [AVweb].

Sept. 22 – Technical problems disrupt flights across the US Northeast: Damaged communications lines at a key air traffic control

facility in Philadelphia had been repaired, allowing airports across the U.S. Northeast to resume operations after hours of disruptions, the nation's transportation secretary said Monday evening. Hundreds of flights were canceled, including more than 600 into and out of Newark Liberty International Airport, as the outage hit every major airport in the New York City area. Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy also said in an online post that "it will take some time to clear all existing delays" despite the repairs. The primary communications line at the Federal Aviation Administration facility in Philadelphia had failed earlier Monday, while the backup fiber optic line was inadvertently severed by railroad construction workers. The failures left controllers without radar or communications for hours. [AP].

Sept. 22 – Accident Cessna 172B Skyhawk N44P: The aircraft crashed under unknown circumstances, near Royal City, Washington, U.S., involving 1 fatality. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 22 – Incident Piper PA-28-140 Cherokee N3713K: The airplane struck a PAPI light on landing damaging the fuselage, near Franklin-Hart Airport (18A), Canon, GA. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 23 – PAX traffic in H1 2026 reflects 'marked slowdown from 2025': The Airports Council International (ACI) latest Annual World Airport Traffic report claims that there has been a "marked slowdown from 2025's pace". On September 23, 2026, ACI said that global passenger traffic reached approximately 4.7 billion in the first six months of 2026, an increase of just 0.6% on the same period last year. Against the backdrop of the Middle East conflict involving the US, Iran and Israel it is perhaps unsurprising that the region saw the sharpest decline, with traffic down 21%. While North America has remained largely flat, growth continued across Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific, according to the report. [AeroTime].

Sept. 23 – Starfighters Space Sells Mach 2 Flight Testing by the Sortie: Getting time in a U.S. supersonic wind tunnel can take over a year, and new aerospace technology developers typically pay for the whole facility by the week. Starfighters Space thinks it can sell those customers something better: several minutes at Mach 2 under the wing of a fighter designed in the 1950s, with less wait time. Based at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida with a second base at Midland International Air & Space Port in Texas, the company has a fleet of eight Lockheed F-104 Starfighters. It sells time on them to defense contractors, government laboratories, and universities that want to expose hardware to sustained flight at Mach 2, twice the speed of sound. [AIN].

Sept. 23 – Pilot rescued after Hawker Hunter crashes off California coast: A US Navy crew rescued the pilot of a Hawker Hunter after the jet went down in the Pacific Ocean off California on September 22, 2026, following a reported loss of engine thrust. The aircraft, operated by military training contractor Airborne Tactical Advantage Company (ATAC), crashed about six miles northwest of Morro Bay. Coast Guard spokesperson Kenneth Wiese confirmed the rescue. The pilot's condition was not immediately available. [...] Aircraft history records trace the Hunter to Royal Air Force service as XF947, followed by service with the Swiss Air Force. Canadian company Lortie Aviation acquired it in 2017, and it subsequently received its US registration, N345AX. ATAC provides civilian-operated aircraft to help train US Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force crews. Its

pilots fly as opposing forces during exercises, using aircraft including Hawker Hunters, Mirage F1s and F-21 Kfirs. The company also uses Hunters for air-to-surface and fleet training missions. [AeroTime].

Sept. 23 – *Codoni v. Port of Seattle*, No. 25-2830 (9th Cir. 2026): Several individuals living within a five-mile radius of the Seattle-Tacoma Airport sued two major airlines and the Port of Seattle. They alleged that pollution from aircraft takeoffs and landings caused harm to their health and property, particularly from particulate matter and other pollutants released by aircraft engines and fuselages. Plaintiffs claimed the defendants had knowledge of studies linking these pollutants to negative health outcomes and property devaluation but failed to remediate or prevent further pollution. The affected community was described as disproportionately composed of minority, immigrant, and low-income residents. The plaintiffs initially brought their case in King County Superior Court, but the defendants removed it to the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington. The plaintiffs advanced state tort and constitutional claims, seeking various remedies including damages, injunctive relief, and remediation. The defendants moved to dismiss, arguing that the claims were a collateral attack on federal agency actions, were expressly and impliedly preempted by federal law, and failed to state a claim. The district court denied the motions, finding that the complaint did not directly challenge any specific agency order and that preemption was not clearly established at this stage. The district court certified its order for interlocutory appeal. Reviewing the case on interlocutory appeal, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit held that the district court properly exercised jurisdiction because the collateral attack doctrine did not apply; defendants could not identify any specific agency orders inescapably implicated by the plaintiffs' claims. However, the court held that the claims were expressly preempted by Section 233 of the Clean Air Act, which bars states from enforcing any emission standards for aircraft pollutants unless identical to federal standards. The court reversed the district court's order denying the motion to dismiss and remanded the case. [Justia].

Sept. 23 – *Bandary v. Delta Air Lines, Inc.*, No. 24-7204 (9th Cir. 2026): The case centers on an incident during a Delta Air Lines domestic flight, where a passenger's behavior prompted concerns among fellow travelers and flight attendants. After an off-duty pilot and other passengers reported the passenger's conduct as suspicious, the lead flight attendant, following consultation with the captain, approached the passenger and attempted to ask him to remain seated. This interaction escalated into a physical confrontation, leading the flight attendant to request assistance from a federal law enforcement agent onboard. The agent, with the flight attendant's help, restrained the passenger until the plane landed. The passenger later alleged that he suffered physical and emotional injuries as a result of the restraint. At trial in the United States District Court for the Central District of California, a jury found in favor of the passenger, awarding him substantial damages for bodily and emotional injuries. However, the district court vacated the verdict, citing excessive damages and the interdependence of liability and damages. The court subsequently granted summary judgment for Delta Air Lines, concluding that the airline was immune from liability under the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA) for any injuries sustained after the flight attendants reported the passenger's behavior to law

enforcement. The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reviewed the district court's decision de novo. The Ninth Circuit affirmed the district court's grant of summary judgment, holding that ATSA immunity applies not only to the initial disclosure of suspicious activity to law enforcement but also to subsequent conduct stemming from law enforcement's decisions following such disclosure. The court found no genuine dispute of material fact regarding whether the passenger's conduct was objectively suspicious or whether Delta was solely responsible for the injuries. As Delta was immune for all physical injuries, the passenger could not recover for any alleged emotional injuries under the Montreal Convention. [Justia].

Sept. 23 – Accident Magni Gyro M16 Tandem Trainer N109MG: The gyroplane struck a power line and crashed, near Lesterville, Missouri, U.S., involving 2 fatalities. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 24 – Accident Aeronca 7 Champion: A small plane crashed for unknown reason, near Hesperia, CA, U.S., involving 2 fatalities. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 24 – *Infanger v. State of Idaho, Idaho Department of Transportation*, Doc. No. 52692 (Sup. Ct. Idaho, Sept. 24, 2026): This case stems from a fatal plane crash in which a pilot, Chelsea Brittney Infanger, collided with exhaust stacks owned by a processing plant near the Burley Municipal Airport in Idaho. The stacks, which extended over 100 feet high, were situated within the runway's approach path and had been the subject of prior regulatory concern. The pilot's parents brought a wrongful death suit, alleging that the Idaho Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics negligently failed to regulate or mitigate the known risk posed by these stacks, arguing that various statutory, common law, special relationship, and contractual duties compelled the Division to act. After settlements with other defendants, the case proceeded against the Division in the District Court of the Fourth Judicial District, Ada County. The Division moved for summary judgment, contending it owed no individualized duty to the deceased under the Airport Zoning Act, common law, or through a special relationship, and that it was immune under the Idaho Tort Claims Act. The district court agreed, holding that the Division's statutory duties were general obligations to the public, not specific duties to individual aviators, and found no basis for liability under special relationship or contract theories. The court granted summary judgment to the Division, and the plaintiffs appealed. The Supreme Court of the State of Idaho affirmed the district court's decision. It held that the Airport Zoning Act did not create a tort duty to a particular class of persons, but rather imposed general obligations for public safety, and thus could not support a negligence per se claim. The Court also found that the plaintiffs did not preserve or demonstrate the elements necessary for a special relationship or assumed duty sufficient to impose liability. The Court declined to award attorney fees, but granted costs to the Division. [Justia].

Sept. 25 – Accident Let L-410UVP 9S-GUC: The Let L-410UVP, 9S-GUC, crashed and burst into flames near Kenge, D.R. Congo. All 17 occupants reportedly perished in the accident. The flight departed Kikwit about 13:50. It came down near Kenge about 14:05. Preliminary information suggests that the Auditor General of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo was on board, accompanied by a

major, a captain, and other military personnel as well as some civilians. [Aviation Safety Network]; [Hype/Aviation]; [AviationHerald].

Sept. 26 – Accident Rockwell Commander 112 N1102J: A Rockwell Commander 112, N1102J, was destroyed when it crashed under unknown circumstances in a field near Chatsworth, Georgia. The pilot was fatally injured. [Aviation Safety Network]; A man was found dead Saturday inside a small plane that crashed in a field off Brown Bridge Road in Murray County. Sheriff Jimmy Davenport said deputies were dispatched to the scene at 11:44 a.m. after the property owner's brother-in-law discovered the wreckage while bush hogging a field. Authorities did not know exactly when the crash occurred but said it happened sometime Saturday. The pilot, who authorities have identified as Dean Dale Worthingstun, 68, of Morganton was the only person aboard the craft and was flying from Athens, Tennessee. Davenport said the plane was scheduled to land at Dalton Municipal Airport, where the pilot had rented a hangar. The crash occurred approximately 1.5 miles from the airport. [ChatsworthTimes].

Sept. 26 – Accident Robinson R44 Raven I C-GARB: A Robinson R44 Raven I, performing a helicopter tour, crashed shortly after takeoff in a field near Rang des Écossais, Sainte-Brigide-d'Iberville, Quebec, and a post crash fire erupted. The four occupants perished and the helicopter was destroyed by fire. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 27 – Delta Boston-Bound Flight Diverts to Porto After Cabin Smoke Sickens Passengers: A Delta Air Lines flight from Barcelona to Boston diverted to Porto, Portugal, after smoke filled the cabin while the aircraft was crossing the Atlantic at 32,000 feet. Reports said 11 to 14 people were treated for smoke inhalation, with three or four passengers taken to hospitals. [Hype/Aviation]; A Delta Airlines Airbus A330-200, registration N824NW performing flight DL-251 from Barcelona, SP (Spain) to Boston, MA (USA) with 296 people on board, was enroute at FL320 over the Atlantic Ocean about 380nm northwest of Porto (Portugal) when the crew turned the aircraft around, descended to FL100 and diverted to Porto. On approach the crew reported they had 10-12 people affected, two flight attendants were on oxygen not feeling well at all. The aircraft landed on Porto's runway 36 about 80 minutes later. Portuguese Authorities reported the aircraft diverted due to smoke on board, 3 passengers were taken to a hospital and 8 passengers were treated at the airport. The airline reported a mechanical issue. A passenger reported a burning odour near to the 2L door. [TheAviationHerald].

Sept. 27 – Accident Piper PA-18 Replica N43LK: An experimental Piper PA-18 Replica, built by Mikael Rovala, crashed under unknown circumstances shortly after takeoff from runway 18 at Buffalo Municipal Airport (KCFE), Buffalo, Minnesota. One of the two occupants perished. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 27 – Accident Beechcraft 35-A33 Debonair N1288Z: A Beechcraft 35-A33 Debonair, N1288Z, sustained substantial damage in a forced landing south of East Troy Municipal Airport (57C), East Troy, Wisconsin. The pilot and three passengers survived with non-life-threatening injuries. A nearby Cessna Carvan (N40EA) spotted the crash and dropped skydivers to render aid. [Aviation Safety Network]; [AeroTime].

Sept. 27 – Incident Piper PA-17 Vagabond N4666H: A small plane crashed Sunday in the marshy waters off Jekyll Island,

prompting a rescue effort by U.S. Coast Guard and crews from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Coast Guard Station Brunswick rescue crew assisted Georgia DNR officers located the plane and rescuing the pilot, whom a post on X said was in "good condition." [Aviation Safety Network-Action News JAX].

Sept. 28 – Swiftair convicted over Air Algérie AH5017 crash: The Paris Criminal Court convicted Spanish operator Swiftair of involuntary manslaughter on September 28, 2026, over the crash of Air Algérie flight AH5017 in Mali, which killed all 116 people on board in July 2014. The ruling closes the first-instance phase of a case that took more than 12 years to reach judgment. Swiftair stood trial in Paris as a legal entity from March 9 to March 26, 2026. At the close of the hearings, the prosecution requested a €225,000 fine, the maximum penalty a company can face for involuntary manslaughter under French law. Swiftair's lawyers sought an acquittal, arguing that external factors caused the accident. The French investigating magistrates who sent the case to trial had pointed to failings by the company, notably in how the crew was trained. [...] Before the trial, Swiftair tried to halt the French case on double-jeopardy grounds, citing a provisional dismissal of proceedings in Spain. In April 2025, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) found a referral from the Paris court inadmissible. In November 2025, French judges rejected a second attempt to send questions to the CJEU. Swiftair has the right to appeal the judgment that was issued on September 28, 2026. [AeroTime].

Sept. 28 – Dassault files complaint over damage at Rafale plant: Dassault Aviation has filed a criminal complaint over acts of damage at its Cergy plant, northwest of Paris, where Rafale fuselage sections are assembled. Police have arrested a worker at the site. In a statement to French broadcaster BFMTV on September 25, 2026, the company said it had "filed a complaint for acts of damage committed in the Cergy plant" and that a "collaborator" had been arrested. "Justice is taking its course," Dassault added. The manufacturer did not say what was damaged, when the acts took place, or whether Rafale production or deliveries were affected. As of September 28, 2026, no prosecutor's statement setting out the charges had been published. [...] The case came to light a week after President Emmanuel Macron met party leaders at the Élysée Palace on September 18, 2026. In remarks published by the presidency, Macron said the government had been asked to prepare a plan to protect critical infrastructure "as well as the most sensitive sites of our defense industrial and technological base" against drone and cyber attacks. [AeroTime].

Sept. 28 – Accident ultralight: An ultralight aircraft crashed and burst into flames during landing near the Fauillet landing strip, France. The 72 years old pilot was killed and the aircraft partially consumed by fire. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 29 – Accident Pitts S-1 Special N292Y: A Pitts S-1 Special, N292Y, sustained substantial damage when it collided with trees near Madison, Georgia. The pilot suffered minor injuries. The impact knocked down power lines in the area, leading local authorities to close Dixie Highway at Shoals Court, so crews could safely fix the power grid. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 30 – Accident AgustaWestland AW139: A helicopter crashed in Marondera, Zimbabwe, for unknown reason. All 6 occupants have reportedly died, including millionaire tycoon Wicknell Chivayo

and his wife. Chivayo had reportedly recently acquired a AgustaWestland AW139, formerly OE-XGD, in June. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 30 – Flydubai pilot allegedly tried to crash FZ1073: Flydubai has confirmed that an altercation occurred on the flight deck of FZ1073 [a Boeing 737 MAX 8] and that other flydubai crew members traveling aboard the aircraft secured the plane and diverted it to Saudi Arabia. “An altercation occurred in the flight deck of flight FZ 1073, operating from Dubai International (DXB) to Ben Gurion International Airport (TLV), on 30 September,” the airline said in a new statement. “The aircraft was successfully secured by on-duty flydubai crew travelling on the flight, who diverted and landed the aircraft safely at Tabuk Airport (TUU). All passengers and crew are safe and accounted for.” Flydubai said it had deployed two replacement aircraft to Tabuk to assist passengers and crew and that the incident had no impact on other scheduled operations. The airline cautioned that the reasons and motives behind the incident remain unknown and are subject to a formal investigation. “We urge all parties to refrain from premature speculation while authorities gather the facts,” flydubai said. [AeroTime]; [Hype/Aviation]; [TheAviationHerald]; A Flydubai flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv was diverted to Saudi Arabia Wednesday after one pilot reportedly stabbed the other during a cockpit altercation, prompting passengers and off-duty crew members to intervene. According to a report from *The Wall Street Journal*, Flight FZ1073, a Boeing 737 MAX 8, was carrying more than 100 passengers when the incident occurred while the aircraft was flying toward Israel. Passengers reported hearing shouting from the cockpit before several people moved forward to help subdue the attacker. The aircraft subsequently made an emergency landing at Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. Flydubai said the aircraft was secured by on-duty crew members who were traveling on the flight and that all passengers and crew were safe and accounted for. The airline said the circumstances and motive remain under investigation. Flight-tracking data showed the aircraft descend sharply during the incident. Reports noted the 737 MAX 8 dropped more than 17,000 feet in about two minutes before diverting toward Tabuk. The aircraft also transmitted emergency signals during the event. [AVweb].

Sept. 30 – Accident Embraer EMB-810D Seneca III PT-RSN: An Embraer EMB-810D Seneca III (Neiva built) crashed under unknown circumstances in a wooded area near Mulher Cidadã, Divinópolis do Tocantins, Tocantins, Brazil. Both occupants perished and the destroyed aircraft was located after a search 4.5 hours. [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 30 – Accident Eurocopter EC 135P2+ N313RX: A REACH Air Medical Services Eurocopter EC 135P2+, flight REH16, callsign Reachmed 16, crashed about eight seconds after takeoff from Pebbly Beach Helispot, into the waters near Avalon, Catalina Island, California. Two of the five occupants perished and two were injured and rescued and the patient is missing. [Aviation Safety Network]; [Hype/Aviation]; [AP].

Sept. 30 – Military Drone Makers' Trade Secrets Suit Survives Dismissal: A Utah federal judge has allowed two military drone companies to proceed with most of their lawsuit accusing a former executive and his new company of misappropriating trade secrets to compete in the military drone market. [Law360].

Sept. 30 – Joby Air Taxi Trade Secrets Suit Against Archer Trimmed: A California federal judge has cleared Joby Aviation to advance a slimmed-down lawsuit alleging rival electric air-taxi developer Archer Aviation misappropriated its trade secrets, but again rejected Archer's counterclaims alleging Joby unfairly jockeyed for government contracts and concealed its pervasive China ties. [Law360].

Aviation, Military

Sept. 3 – Coast Guard Jet Carrying DHS Secretary Loses Engine: A U.S. Coast Guard C-37A carrying Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin and 13 other people diverted to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Wednesday after the flight crew reported a loss of right engine power. The aircraft landed at about 1:35 p.m. EDT following a flight from the Atlanta area. “We just lost our right engine and would like to declare an emergency and immediate landing at DCA,” a pilot told air traffic controllers, according to CBS News. The crew reported 14 people aboard and approximately 2.5 hours of fuel remaining. Mullin said after the flight that the aircraft landed on one engine. Reagan National officials said airport fire and rescue personnel examined the aircraft after landing before it taxied from the runway. No injuries were reported. The C-37A is the military designation for a Gulfstream V business jet and is used by the Coast Guard to transport senior officials. The aircraft involved has been in Coast Guard service since 2002 and is based at Air Station Washington. [AVweb].

Sept. 5 – Greek air force jet crashes at annual aerial show, kills 2 pilots and starts fire: A Greek air force jet crashed at an air show north of Athens on Saturday, killing the two pilots, officials said, as thousands of people were in attendance at the event. The crash of the twin-seat Phantom F4 jet occurred during a low-altitude maneuver. A fire after the crash sent up large plumes of black smoke. There were no injuries among the spectators. [AP]; [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 8 – Army Says Border Laser Cut Drone Activity 75%: The U.S. military says suspected drone activity in the Rio Grande Valley has dropped roughly 75% since troops began using a high-energy laser to bring down unmanned aircraft along the southern border. The system first engaged drones Aug. 25 and 26 and has destroyed 11 over a 10-day period, according to CBS News. Military officials acknowledged that other factors, including operators shifting routes, could also be contributing to the decline. The military had already been using electronic jamming to send some drones back toward their operators. Officials say about 300 drones believed to be linked to cartels have been stopped since the beginning of the year. The laser gives troops the option of physically disabling an aircraft they consider a threat. “The game changer is ensuring that that tool can’t be used again against you,” Army Col. Robert Felicio, commander of the 130th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, told CBS News. [AVweb].

Sept. 8 – Honeywell Tests Magnetic Navigation in GPS-free Flight: Honeywell Aerospace and the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), the Pentagon’s commercial technology arm, have completed a flight test of a quantum-sensor-based navigation system. An Embraer 170 test aircraft, guided by the experimental navigation system, flew over the Pacific Ocean for 4 hours 23 minutes without GPS, DIU announced on September 4. Flying under DIU’s MagNav magnetic navigation

program, the airplane made a round trip from Everett Paine Field (KPAE) north of Seattle to the Gulf of Alaska. Without using satellites, the quantum-sensor system delivered position accuracy 89% better than conventional backup navigation would have achieved, DIU said. Pilots viewed the navigation interface on standard tablets rather than through the aircraft's installed avionics—a detail DIU cites as evidence that operators could adopt the system without extensive flight-deck overhauls. Magnetic navigation relies on quantum magnetometers that detect subtle variations in Earth's magnetic field caused by the composition of the planet's crust, then cross-reference those readings against a magnetic map to pinpoint an aircraft's location. Because the reference signal comes from the ground rather than a satellite constellation, DIU claims it cannot be jammed or spoofed. [AIN].

Sept. 9 – House Report Calls for Study of Brain Injuries in Navy Pilots: A House Oversight Committee report is calling for a comprehensive study of the long-term effects of high-G maneuvers, carrier launches, and arrested landings on Navy aviators, saying the service has not done enough to determine whether repeated exposure could cause cumulative brain injuries. [AVweb].

Sept. 11 – F-16s That Defended Capital on 9/11 Preserved for History: Three F-16s that flew in defense of Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11, 2001, will be retired and preserved as museum artifacts. The three planes all flew on 9/11: two were among the first three jets to scramble in defense of the capital and the third escorted Air Force One as it returned to Washington later in the day. [Air&SpaceForces].

Sept. 11 – Ukraine claims deepest drone strike of war with Russia: Ukraine says it has carried out its deepest drone strike of the war, hitting gas-processing facilities in western Siberia after the aircraft reportedly flew nearly 2,000 miles to reach their targets. Ukraine's General Staff and Special Operations Forces reported the attacks on September 9, 2026. They identified the targets as the Novy Urengoy Gas Condensate Treatment Plant and the Purovsky Gas Processing Plant in Russia's Yamalo-Nenets region. Ukrainian defense manufacturer Fire Point said its FP-1 attack drones carried out the operation, covering more than 3,200 kilometers, or approximately 1,990 miles. The claimed flight distance has not been independently verified. [AeroTime].

Sept. 12 – F-22 pilot receives USAF's highest safety award after belly landing: The US Air Force has presented its highest flight safety award to an F-22 Raptor pilot who landed a stealth fighter on its belly in the Middle East after a main wheel assembly separated from the aircraft on takeoff. US Air Force Chief of Staff General Ken Wilsbach presented the 2025 Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy to Captain Michael Cloninger, of the 90th Fighter Squadron, 3rd Operations Group, during a ceremony at the Pentagon on September 8, 2026. The Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy is the US Air Force's most prestigious flight safety award and the only one presented by the service's chief of staff. The award is named after First Lieutenant Koren Kolligian Jr., a US Air Force pilot whose T-33 Shooting Star disappeared off the California coast on September 14, 1955. [AeroTime].

Sept. 14 – Swarm Aero Unveils 9,000-NM Gamera Drone: California-based Swarm Aero on Monday unveiled Gamera, a new Group 5 unmanned aircraft developed for long-range strike and surveillance missions. The company revealed the aircraft at the Air & Space Forces Association's Air, Space & Cyber Conference in National

Harbor, Maryland, as the Air Force evaluates concepts for its next generation of large unmanned aircraft. Gamera has a 72-foot wingspan and uses a Honeywell TPE331 turboprop engine. Swarm says the aircraft will fly more than 9,000 nautical miles without refueling and carry more than 2,800 pounds across seven payload stations. The company says the design can accommodate LRASM and JASSM-ER weapons as well as other cruise and hypersonic missiles. [AVweb].

Sept. 14 – NATO Eurofighter Shoots Down Drone After Belarus-to-Lithuania Airspace Incursion: A NATO-intercepted drone entered Lithuanian airspace from neighboring Belarus and was shot down by an Italian Eurofighter F-2000A Typhoon, as Russia's war against Ukraine intensifies. The incident highlights mounting pressure on NATO's eastern-flank air defenses and Lithuania's readiness to respond to aerial threats. [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 15 – Russian frigate fires flares at Danish military helicopter as NATO responds to drone incursions across Europe: A Russian frigate fired two flares—one narrowly missing a Danish military helicopter—while it photographed the vessel in international waters off Denmark. The incident came alongside an Italian NATO fighter's shootdown of a suspected Russian drone over Lithuania and Polish air operations after Russian attacks on Ukraine. [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 16 – Houthis claim Saudi F-15 shootdown over Yemen: Yemen's Houthi movement said on September 16, 2026, that it shot down a Royal Saudi Air Force F-15 over Marib Governorate. Saudi authorities had not commented on the claim as of publication. The claim has not been independently verified. Neither the Saudi-led coalition nor the Saudi Ministry of Defense had addressed it as of publication. Saudi Arabia operates more than 200 F-15 fighters, a fleet for which the US State Department approved a proposed \$3 billion sustainment package in February 2026. [AeroTime].

Sept. 17 – F-16 Crashes During Training Exercise in Michigan; Pilot Ejects: An F-16 Fighting Falcon assigned to the Texas Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Wing crashed during a training mission in Michigan on Sept. 17. The fighter's sole pilot ejected safely. The Michigan State Police said in a social media post the pilot is in stable condition at a local hospital and there are no other known injuries related to the crash. In a statement, the wing said the aircraft was conducting a "routine training mission" in the afternoon at Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center, a Michigan Air National Guard facility in the northern part of the state near Traverse City. The F-16 is based at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. [AirandSpaceForces]; [AeroTime]; [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 20 – F-35A components diverted from Australia to Hong Kong, prompting U.S. congressional probe: Sensitive components from Australia's F-35A fleet, including parts potentially associated with the aircraft's cockpit canopy, were reportedly diverted to Hong Kong while en route to the United States for repair; some components subsequently disappeared. Australia defended its classified-technology safeguards and export controls as a U.S. House committee investigates. [Hype/Defense]; [AeroTime].

Sept. 21 – China's J-50/XDS may be testing new radar: China's J-50/XDS may be testing new radar; The tentatively-designated J-50/XDS features a unique tailless configuration. Fighter prototype

underlines China's aggressive push for new capabilities. By May Lee. [FlightGlobal].

Sept. 21 – US clears Saudi F-35 sale amid China security concerns: The United States has moved forward with a \$24.3 billion sale of 48 F-35 Lightning II fighters to Saudi Arabia. This brings the kingdom a step closer to becoming the first Gulf operator of the stealth aircraft, despite fresh warnings from US intelligence agencies about the risk of sensitive technology reaching China. The State Department formally notified Congress of the proposed sale on September 17, 2026, a day after reports emerged detailing US intelligence concerns over Saudi Arabia's military and technological ties with Beijing. If completed, the deal would make Saudi Arabia only the second F-35 operator in the Middle East after Israel. It would also mark a major expansion of the Royal Saudi Air Force's capabilities, adding a stealth fighter with advanced sensors and networked warfare capabilities to a combat fleet currently centered on the F-15. [AeroTime].

Sept. 22 – F-16 crashes near Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany: An F-16 fighter jet crashed near Spangdahlem Air Base, the US Air Force installation in Germany's Eifel region, on September 22, 2026, injuring its pilot. A spokesperson for the base told the New York Post that the aircraft was approaching Spangdahlem when it crashed. The pilot ejected and was receiving medical treatment, the spokesperson said. The extent of the injuries was not disclosed. [AeroTime]; [Air&Space].

Sept. 22 – F-16 Thunderbird Crash of Dec. 2025 Caused by Turned Blade Deep in Engine: A misaligned vane in an F-16 engine that field-level maintainers cannot see to inspect caused one of the U.S. Air Force's Thunderbird jets to crash last December, a new report concludes. The same problem led another F-16 to crash 20 months earlier. The pilots ejected in both cases, escaping with minor injuries, while both jets were total losses. Separate Air Force Accident Investigation Boards came to similar conclusions. The report on the Dec. 3, 2025, Thunderbird crash in the California desert was released Sept. 21. The report on the prior crash, on April 30, 2024, near Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., was released months before the Thunderbird crash, in February 2025. The latest investigation report valued the loss of the Thunderbird F-16 at \$33.5 million. [Air&Space].

Sept. 23 – South Korea receives first production KF-21 fighter: South Korea's Air Force took delivery of its first production KF-21 Boramae fighter on September 22, 2026. The aircraft, serial 001, was handed over at Korea Aerospace Industries' (KAI) plant at Sacheon Airport (HIN), the Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF) and the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) said in a joint announcement. [AeroTime]; [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 23 – RAF Hawk T2 crashes near RAF Valley, pilots eject: A Royal Air Force (RAF) Hawk T2 advanced jet trainer crashed near RAF Valley on the island of Anglesey, North Wales, on the afternoon of September 23, 2026. Both pilots ejected. Police said their injuries were thought to be minor. "An incident involving an RAF T2 Hawk aircraft, flying out of RAF Valley, occurred near Anglesey," an RAF spokesperson said in a statement to media. "An investigation is underway and we will not comment further at this time." [AeroTime]; [AviationWeek].

Sept. 23 – Air Force Cuts Civilian Jobs from China-Focused Research Center: The Air Force is slashing all civilian positions at its

premier research institute for Chinese military aviation, prompting concern among experts who say it will dilute the service's focus on the Pentagon's most significant long-term adversary. "We are disappointed to have to announce that Air University has decided to close the China Aerospace Studies Institute," Brendan Mulvaney, the institute's director, wrote in a message released Sept. 22. The China Aerospace Studies Institute has been staffed primarily by civilian scholars and analysts who work for Air University, which is part of Air Education and Training Command. For years, they have been preparing reports on the Chinese military, translating Chinese military doctrine, and contributing to what is widely considered to be the largest open-source repository of information on the People's Liberation Army's military aviation, space, cyber, and missile forces. [Air&Space].

Sept. 23 – Pilot rescued after Hawker Hunter crashes off California coast: A US Navy crew rescued the pilot of a Hawker Hunter after the jet went down in the Pacific Ocean off California on September 22, 2026, following a reported loss of engine thrust. The aircraft, operated by military training contractor Airborne Tactical Advantage Company (ATAC), crashed about six miles northwest of Morro Bay. Coast Guard spokesperson Kenneth Wiese confirmed the rescue. The pilot's condition was not immediately available. [...] Aircraft history records trace the Hunter to Royal Air Force service as XF947, followed by service with the Swiss Air Force. Canadian company Lortie Aviation acquired it in 2017, and it subsequently received its US registration, N345AX. ATAC provides civilian-operated aircraft to help train US Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force crews. Its pilots fly as opposing forces during exercises, using aircraft including Hawker Hunters, Mirage F1s and F-21 Kfirs. The company also uses Hunters for air-to-surface and fleet training missions. [AeroTime].

Sept. 27 – Five Arrested in Suspected Terror Plot Near RAF Fairford, U.S.-Used Air Base in Britain: British police arrested five men on suspicion of terrorism and explosives offenses outside RAF Fairford, a western England base operated by the U.S. Officials declared a major incident, established roadblocks and said the facility—used by U.S. Air Force personnel and bombers—was the target of a suspected attack plot. [Hype/Defense].

Sept. 28 – For First Time, US F-35s Will Join Exercise in India: Six U.S. Air Force F-35A fighters and 200-plus Airmen deployed to India on Sept. 26 for their first appearance in a large-scale exercise on Indian soil. Exercise Tarang Shakti will run from Sept. 26 to Oct. 12, according to the Indian Air Force, with eight countries contributing aircraft. First held in 2024, the exercise is India's largest multinational aerial training event. U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor and Pacific Air Forces confirmed the arrival of the F-35s and released images of them at Jodhpur Air Force Station. The aircraft are from the 13th Fighter Squadron at Misawa Air Base, Japan. [Air&Space].

Sept. 29 – Russian Tu-95 bomber crashes in Amur region, killing six: A Russian Tu-95 strategic bomber crashed during a training flight in the Amur region of Russia's Far East on September 29, 2026, killing six of the seven crew members on board, the Russian Ministry of Defense said. "The aircraft went down in an uninhabited area. According to preliminary data, six crew members were killed, and one was injured and evacuated to a medical facility," the ministry said in a statement carried by Interfax. The ministry said the bomber was

flying without munitions and that a commission of the Russian Aerospace Forces had been sent to the site to establish the circumstances of the crash. The Amur regional government said the aircraft came down near the village of Krasnoyarsk. It said the crew “did everything possible to steer it away from residential buildings”. [AeroTime]; [Aviation Safety Network].

Sept. 29 – Two aircrew eject during USS Eisenhower recovery mishap: Two aviators ejected from their [EA-18G Growler] during a mishap aboard the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) off the coast of Virginia on September 28, 2026. Four shipboard personnel were also injured, the US Navy said. According to a US Navy statement, the mishap occurred at approximately 18:18 local time during aircraft recovery operations, when aircraft land back aboard the carrier. The two aviators, assigned to Carrier Air Wing 3 (CVW-3), ejected and were subsequently recovered by search and rescue personnel. Both aviators were returned to the ship and were being evaluated by medical personnel at the time of the statement. Four shipboard personnel were also receiving medical care, with one sailor transported to a hospital in the Norfolk area for injuries the US Navy described as non-life-threatening. [AeroTime]; [Hype/Defense].

Aerospace, Department of Justice & State Action

Sept. 1 – Boeing 737 MAX Victim-Fund Payments Set To Begin: Payments from a \$444.5 million compensation fund established under Boeing’s 2025 agreement with the U.S. Justice Department are set to begin for beneficiaries of the 346 people killed in the Lion Air Flight 610 and Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 accidents. Chicago-based Ribbeck Law Chartered, which represents 93 clients connected to the two accidents, announced the start of payments Tuesday. Second Victim Fund Under Boeing’s 2025 non-prosecution agreement, the estate of each person killed is entitled to an equal share of the \$444.5 million fund. It is separate from a \$500 million compensation program established through Boeing’s 2021 deferred prosecution agreement, bringing the two Justice Department victim funds to a combined \$944.5 million. [AVweb]; [Avi-Go].

Sept. 1 – Honeywell Aerospace To Pay \$2M In Security Lapses Case: Honeywell Aerospace Inc. will pay \$2 million to settle a False Claims Act suit alleging it failed to provide basic cybersecurity protections for government data under defense contracts it won for quantum-computing services, the U.S. Justice Department announced Tuesday. [Law360].

Sept. 2 – Boeing paid \$3.1 million fine to FAA over widespread safety violations: Boeing paid a \$3.1 million fine to the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration this year, after the agency said the planemaker had committed a series of safety violations, including actions tied to the 2024 Alaska Airlines MAX 9 mid-air emergency, the FAA told Reuters Wednesday. The FAA said the full amount sought in September 2025 was paid by Boeing in January and had not been previously disclosed publicly. Boeing also confirmed to Reuters it paid the fine. [Reuters]; [Hype/Aviation].

Sept. 8 – Former Flight School Owners Face RICO Charges: Two former owners of FLYT Aviation in Peachtree City, Georgia, have been arrested on theft and racketeering charges following an investigation into flight school student training funds. Alex Hamlin, 34, and Harlan Hamlin, 59, each face 20 counts of theft by conversion and

one count of violating Georgia’s Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, according to a Georgia Bureau of Investigation release. Both were booked into the Fayette County Jail on Sept. 4. FLYT Aviation was sold to another owner in October 2024. Peachtree City police began receiving reports the following month from students who said money they paid for their flight school expenses did not match their account balances. The department later requested assistance from GBI’s Financial Investigation Unit for a forensic financial audit. Investigators said nearly 50 alleged victims eventually came forward. The GBI said investigators found several student accounts had allegedly been misappropriated while the Hamlins operated the school. The affected accounts included funds tied to aviation scholarships and student financing programs. The agency began assisting Peachtree City police in February 2025, and the investigation continued for more than a year before the arrests. [AVweb]; [Update, AVweb].

Sept. 8 – Treasury Grounds Iranian Airlines with Sweeping Sanctions Action: Under Operation Economic Outcast, the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned 36 targets for supporting Iran’s aviation sector, which the regime uses to move weapons, personnel, and illicit cargo. Today’s action also targeted covert front companies, foreign intermediaries, and deceptive transshipment routes that Iran relies on to obtain U.S.-origin aircraft and sensitive technology. In addition to OFAC’s action, Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) is issuing an Alert asking financial institutions to report procurement networks supporting Iran’s aviation industry. [U.S. Dept. Treasury]; [Holland&Knight].

Sept. 9 – New Legislation Would Send Controllers Into the Cockpit: Members of the House Aviation Subcommittee introduced bipartisan legislation aimed at improving coordination between pilots and air traffic controllers by giving controllers an opportunity to observe airline operations from the cockpit. The FLIGHT DECK Act, introduced Sept. 4 by Reps. Nellie Pou (D-N.J.), Rob Bresnahan (R-Pa.) and Hillary Scholten (D-Mich.), would direct the FAA to establish a training program allowing air traffic controllers to ride along on actual flights. The bill, H.R. 10303, has been referred to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. [AVweb]; [AeroTime].

Sept. 10 – DOT Launches Task Force To Advance US Space Transport: The Department of Transportation has launched a Space Policy Administration, Coordination, and Execution task force intended to coordinate space policy activities on behalf of the agency. [Law360].

Sept. 11 – Oakland Police Officers Accused of Faking Checkrides: Two Oakland police helicopter officers have been indicted over an alleged scheme to falsify FAA checkride records. Officers Brandon Mart and David Mac pleaded not guilty on Thursday in a federal court in Oakland. Former FAA aviation safety inspector William Miller was also indicted. Prosecutors allege that the three individuals falsified paperwork for four checkrides between July 2023 and March 2024 that resulted in three credentials for Mart and one for Mac, according to a Chronicle report. [AVweb].

Sept. 16 – Boeing receives fuel-efficiency rule waiver to sell 35 777Fs: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has granted Boeing exemption from fuel-efficiency limits beginning in 2028, enabling the company to sell 35 additional 777F freighters. The

announcement came after Boeing petitioned for a waiver from the new rules in December 2025, citing the fact that the 777F would no longer be eligible to fly after December 31, 2027. In February 2024, the FAA released a final rule to reduce carbon pollution emitted by most large aircraft flying in US airspace. The rule requires incorporating improved fuel-efficient technologies for aircraft manufactured after January 1, 2028, but was designed to not affect aircraft currently in service. [...] The FAA wrote: “The Boeing Company is granted an exemption from the requirements of 14 CFR part 38, subpart B and the referenced Appendix A to the extent necessary to provide Boeing the opportunity to obtain first certificates of airworthiness for up to thirty-five newly built 777F airplanes issued on or after January 1, 2028, through January 1, 2031.” According to the FAA, this exemption is in the “interest of the public and safety,” but it was stressed that this must be time-limited to January 2031. [AeroTime].

Sept. 24 – Minnesota Man Charged With Shooting Firefighting Aircraft: A Minnesota man has been federally indicted for allegedly shooting and damaging a firefighting aircraft while it was battling a wildfire in northern Minnesota earlier this year. According to the Justice Department, Daniel Christian Pettit of Portage Township faces one count of damaging an aircraft and one count of discharging a firearm during a crime of violence. The incident occurred May 15 while pilot Jorden Grieff was conducting water drops near Kjostad Lake. According to MPR News, Grieff heard popping sounds during his 35th pass to scoop water from the lake while flying approximately 500 to 700 feet above the ground. He initially believed the aircraft had struck a bird and continued the firefighting mission. [AVweb].

Sept. 23 – San Diego City Council Tries To Put the Brakes on Robotaxis and Autonomous Vehicles: Although it may not have the force of law, the San Diego City Council on Monday approved a resolution urging the California Legislature and Gov. Gavin Newsom to give local authorities control over the deployment of autonomous vehicles in their respective jurisdictions. Approved on an 8-0 vote, the resolution also includes provisions seeking protections for drivers whose jobs may be jeopardized by the new technology and urges the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority to prohibit autonomous vehicles, also known as AVs, from operating at the San Diego International Airport. [AVweb].

Sept. 23 – Tech CEO Hid Russian Ties To Win Gov't Contracts, Feds Say: The CEO of Virginia-based Oxygen Forensics, which sought contracts with the U.S. Department of Defense and other government agencies, claimed the software company was completely American-owned when it was actually controlled by a group of Russian nationals, the U.S. Department of Justice said Wednesday. [Law360].

Sept. 24 – State, City Battle Over Chattanooga Airport Control: Tennessee is asking a three-judge panel to dismiss Chattanooga's lawsuit challenging changes to the governance of Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport. Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti argues the city and its former airport board have not shown an injury caused by the new state law, according to the Tennessee Lookout. The law, signed in May, gives Tennessee's governor, lieutenant governor and House speaker two appointments each to nine-member boards overseeing several of the state's largest airports. Local mayors retain three appointments. Chattanooga and its locally

appointed airport board sued in June, arguing the change violated the Tennessee Constitution. [AVweb].

Sept. 24 – Drone Pilot Pleads Guilty To Flying Near Charlotte Airport: A Charlotte, North Carolina, man has pleaded guilty to a federal charge after flying a drone without authorization inside a runway exclusion zone at Charlotte Douglas International Airport earlier this year. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina, 50-year-old Marco Antonio Ochoa launched the drone in March from the airport's public Airport Overlook. The observation park is located between two active runways. Ochoa pleaded guilty Tuesday to one count of unsafe operation of an unmanned aircraft. [AVweb].

Sept. 25 – FAA to End Single-Pilot Exemptions for Certain Legacy Cessna Citation Jets After Safety Review: The FAA will rescind exemptions allowing single-pilot operations on certain older Cessna Citation models after finding widespread training and operational noncompliance, alongside broader safety concerns. NBAA and the Citation Jet Pilots Owner Pilot Association are questioning the sudden return to two-pilot requirements. [Hype/Aviation].

Sept. 29 – Feds Ask 4th Circ. To Affirm Conviction In Fake Contracts Plot: The federal government has asked the Fourth Circuit to affirm the conviction of a man accused of defrauding investors through fake NASA contracts who is looking to withdraw his guilty plea and have the trial court judge removed for bias. [Law360].

Sept. 30 – States Sue FAA Over Drone Delivery Review: A coalition of 15 states and Harris County, Texas, filed a lawsuit Monday challenging the FAA's environmental review for expanded commercial drone package delivery operations. The petition, filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, argues the agency failed to adequately evaluate potential environmental effects before issuing a nationwide programmatic assessment and finding of no significant impact. The FAA completed its programmatic review in July. The assessment is intended to support future FAA approvals for individual drone delivery operators, although the agency may still require additional environmental analysis for specific operations. Commercial drone delivery has already expanded in several markets, including operations by Amazon, Wing and Zipline. [AVweb]; [AeroTime].

Space

Sept. 1 – Galactic Energy's Pallas-1 rocket reaches orbit on debut launch: Chinese commercial launch company Galactic Energy successfully launched its first Pallas-1 rocket late Monday, with future flights to attempt first stage recovery. The 52-meter-long, two-stage Pallas-1 rocket lifted off at 10:00 p.m. Eastern, Aug. 31 (0200 UTC, Sept. 1) from a Galactic Energy launch pad at the Dongfeng commercial innovation launch site within the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, northwest China. The second stage achieved orbit, but no payload was reported. There was also no attempt at recovering the first stage, though the Pallas-1 is designed for reusability. The flight, codenamed “Riding the Azure Dragon Across the Milky Way,” was the first use of the company's newly built liquid-rocket launch complex at Jiuquan. The 3.35-meter-diameter Pallas-1 first stage is powered by seven variable thrust Cangqiong-50 kerosene-liquid oxygen engines. The launcher is capable of delivering 5,000-7,000 kilograms to low Earth orbit (LEO), with Galactic Energy targeting launching batches of

satellites for Chinese megaconstellations. The rocket is rated for at least 25 reuses of its first stage, which is designed to land vertically on legs. [SpaceNews].

Sept. 5 – German space rocket reaches orbit in Europe's first commercial launch: German startup Isar Aerospace on Sunday said it would rapidly expand satellite deployments after the first orbital launch of its Spectrum rocket from Arctic Norway, a milestone for Europe's efforts to secure independent access to space. The uncrewed Spectrum became the first commercial rocket to reach orbit from continental Europe, marking a breakthrough for a region where several countries are seeking a foothold in the fast-growing market for satellite launches. [Reuters]; [Hype/Space].

Sept. 10 – France backs Dassault VORTEX reusable spaceplane: France will support Dassault Aviation's VORTEX reusable spaceplane program, extending French backing beyond the VORTEX-D technology demonstrator that received €30 million in funding in 2025. [...] Dassault describes VORTEX as a family of reusable spaceplanes, designed to operate in orbit and return to Earth for a conventional runway landing. The company envisages both civil and military uses, including cargo transport, autonomous orbital missions, in-orbit servicing and intervention. Planned applications include transporting cargo to low Earth orbit, conducting experiments and production in microgravity, technology demonstrations, in-orbit services and defense missions, with crew transportation envisaged at a later stage. Dassault is acting as global architect and integrator of the spaceplane, with development being carried out in partnership with OHB. APCO Technologies, MT Aerospace, Sener, Sonaca and Space Cargo Unlimited have also joined the project, according to Dassault. [AeroTime]; [Aviation Week].

Sept. 11 – Rocket Lab protests NASA's decision to award Blue Origin \$700 million Mars orbiter contract: Rocket Lab still holds out hope that it can build NASA's next Mars orbiter. The agency picked Blue Origin for that job earlier this month, awarding Jeff Bezos' spaceflight company \$700 million to develop, launch and operate the Mars Telecommunications Network (MTN). Today (Sept. 11), however, Rocket Lab announced that it has challenged that decision, filing a formal protest with the Government Accountability Office (GAO). [...] [T]he MTN orbiter will serve as a communications link between mission controllers here on Earth and other NASA spacecraft studying the Red Planet. Just two agency orbiters fulfill that relay role these days, and both are quite old: Mars Odyssey launched in 2001, and the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter lifted off in 2005. [Space.com]; [Hype/Space].

Sept. 11 – Poland launches process to develop a domestic Starlink-like satellite system: Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Poland has begun a process that could lead to a national satellite communications system modeled on Starlink. The announcement, made at Poland's International Defence Industry Exhibition in Kielce, signals an effort to build sovereign space-based connectivity capacity. [Hype/Space].

Sept. 12 – NOAA contract signals sharp increase in commercial weather data purchases: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced significant expansion of its commercial satellite data program with the Sept. 10 award of an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract to 14 companies. The

five-year Space-Based Environmental Monitoring contract with a five-year option was awarded to Spire Global, PlanetiQ, Ethereal Space, Precursor SPC and Tomorrow.io for global navigation satellite system (GNSS) radio occultation data. In addition, Spire, Tomorrow.io and Muon Space will provide GNSS reflectometry observations. Spire, Tomorrow.io, BAE Space & Mission Systems and Weather Stream will provide NOAA with microwave sounder data. Ethereal Space, Tomorrow.io, Muon, Hydrosat and Tropical Weather Analytics will furnish multispectral data. NOAA tapped Spire, PlanetiQ, Ethereal and SpaceX for thermospheric neutral density data, which supports satellite orbit prediction. And Tomorrow.io, Care Weather Technologies, Iceye U.S. and Umbra will measure atmospheric structures with scatterometry, altimetry, synthetic aperture radar and K-band, Ka-band and Ku-band radar data. [SpaceNews]; [SpaceWatchGlobal].

Sept. 15 – Air Force secretary reveals U.S. has deployed undisclosed space-control weapons in orbit: Secretary of the Air Force Troy Meink said the United States has deployed space-control weapons on orbit, marking the first public disclosure by a U.S. official, according to the reports. He did not identify the systems or say whether they are kinetic or non-kinetic. [Hype/Space].

Sept. 16 – NASA Watches Earth's Weight, Finds Center of Mass: New Study: Seasonal changes redistribute enough water around Earth to shift the planet's center of mass back and forth by fractions of an inch relative to its geometric center. NASA scientists are on the case, tracking the oscillations because Earth's center of mass is a crucial reference point for satellite navigation and elevation measurements. A team, led by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, has proposed a way to calculate the seasonal swings with extreme precision. The technique and findings are detailed in a new study published in *Geophysical Journal International*. The authors paint a vivid picture of springtime thaws, churning oceans, and dense winter air shifting massive surface loads from season to season. [NASA-JPL].

Sept. 15-16 – China launches 4 different rockets to orbit in 45 hours: Four different Chinese orbital rockets lifted off in a 45-hour span from Tuesday (Sept. 15) to Wednesday (Sept. 16), flying from three different launch sites. Two of the rockets were private vehicles — and all four ached their missions. The action started Tuesday at 2:26 a.m. EDT (0626 GMT), when the Beijing company LandSpace sent one of its Zhuque-2E rockets up from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China. The Zhuque-2E — which burns liquid methane and liquid oxygen like SpaceX's in-development Starship megarocket — hauled 10 satellites to low Earth orbit (LEO) for the Qianfan ("Thousand Sails") broadband megaconstellation. If all goes to plan, Qianfan will eventually consist of about 15,000 active spacecraft. [Space.com].

Sept. 18 – Galileo Demonstrates First Civil Authenticated Position Fix Under Spoofing: The European Union's Galileo satellite navigation system has demonstrated its first civil authenticated position fix under real-world spoofing conditions, marking a step toward more resilient and trustworthy positioning for civilian users. [SpaceWatchGlobal].

Sept. 21 – NASA Discovery Reveals Complex Water Systems on Early Mars: A new study reveals that Jezero Crater's enigmatic

'Margin Unit' was shaped by a complex sequence of ancient lakes, groundwater systems, and hydrothermal fluids. When NASA's Perseverance rover reached the inner edge of Mars' Jezero Crater in September 2023, mission scientists were surprised by what they found. Called the "Margin Unit," the geologic area stretches along the shoreline of an ancient Martian lake, so they expected sedimentary rocks, which would have formed as layers of sand piled on top of each other over millennia. Composed of clay and silt, sedimentary rocks on Earth are good at preserving past microbial life. The scientists were especially intrigued by strong signals of carbonate minerals detected by Mars orbiters. On Earth, carbonates frequently form in shallow ocean and lake environments capable of supporting life. [NASA-JPL].

Sept. 23 – SpaceX given unique access to classified DoD space tracking data, sources say: WASHINGTON — In an unprecedented move, the Defense Department has agreed to give SpaceX exclusive access to the government's most classified space tracking data, according to a dozen government and industry sources. One of the sources, a Space Force official, told Breaking Defense a "contractual agreement" has been signed between SpaceX and the Space Force's Joint Commercial Operations Cell (JCO), trading company access to US Space Command's (SPACECOM) most detailed version of its High Accuracy Catalog (HAC) of on-orbit objects in exchange for SpaceX giving the JCO data from its Stargaze star-tracking cameras. [BreakingDefense].

Sept. 23 – Asteroid-mining company AstroForge to launch world's 1st totally autonomous spacecraft in 2027: AstroForge plans to make spaceflight history next year. The California-based asteroid-mining company has booked its Autonomy-1 mission on the first-ever flight of Stoke Space's Nova Pathfinder rocket, which is scheduled to launch in early 2027. As its name suggests, Autonomy-1 will operate independently, thanks to AstroForge's newly developed Solo spacecraft intelligence model. "Autonomy-1 will be the first space mission to complete its entire mission after separation without a single command from the ground," AstroForge CEO and co-founder Matt Gialich wrote in a Tuesday (Sept. 22) blog post announcing the mission. [Space.com].

Sept. 24 – NASA selects far-infrared space telescope as first astrophysics probe mission: NASA has selected a far-infrared space telescope as the first in a new line of billion-dollar astrophysics missions as it works to balance that effort with smaller spacecraft. The agency announced Sept. 23 that it picked the Probe far-Infrared Mission for Astrophysics, or PRIMA, as its first Probe Explorer mission for launch in 2033. The decision allows PRIMA to move into Phase B of development. PRIMA is a space telescope with a primary mirror 1.8 meters across. It will carry an imaging polarimeter and high-resolution spectrometer designed to perform observations at far-infrared wavelengths between 24 and 235 microns. The mirror and instruments will be cryogenically cooled to improve their sensitivity for observations of phenomena such as black holes and the formation of exoplanets. "The PRIMA mission is humanity's next window into the deep universe," said Nicky Fox, NASA associate administrator for science, in a statement, "to better understand the formation of planets, stars, black holes and even how water on Earth came to be." [SpaceNews].

Sept. 28 – SpaceX's Starship reaches orbit for the first time but returns early to Earth: SpaceX launched its enormous Starship into orbit for the first time Monday and successfully delivered the most advanced Starlink satellites yet, but cut the flight short to ensure safety. The spacecraft reentered over the Pacific and splashed down north of Hawaii three hours after blasting off from Texas. The company had been aiming for a 10-hour flight, spanning six full laps around Earth, to prove its readiness for NASA's Artemis moon program. Starship tipped over and erupted in flames upon splashdown, a dramatic end to the mission. Founder Elon Musk's Starship almost didn't make it to orbit when one of its engines shut down prematurely. But with everything else working well and the bad engine no longer needed, flight controllers decided, after several tense minutes, to proceed as planned. "Starship is orbital," Mission Control announced to cheers. NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman congratulated SpaceX on reaching orbit and "managing every step in a safe, responsible and especially inspirational way." [AP]; [Space.com].

Space, Human Spaceflight

Sept. 1 – Two astronauts replace ISS camera and docking aid on 6th-ever all-female spacewalk: Two astronauts replaced a spacecraft docking aid and a video camera during a successful spacewalk outside of the International Space Station on Tuesday (Sept. 1). NASA astronaut Jessica Meir and ESA (European Space Agency) astronaut Sophie Adenot got through most of the tasks set out for them even in light of Adenot's spacesuit developing a mobility issue late in the extravehicular activity (EVA), which lasted six hours and 49 minutes. [Space.com].

Sept. 8 – NASA Seeks Proposals To Establish Sustainable Human Moon Base: NASA on Sept. 8 issued a solicitation for proposals to advance the technology and infrastructure needed to explore the Moon and establish a sustainable human Moon Base. "The solicitation targets capability gaps, including power generation, oxygen extraction, and producing materials on the Moon required for construction and operations," the NASA announcement said. "These technologies are essential to making humanity's next great leap in lunar exploration." Proposals issued under the Lunar Enabling Infrastructure Accelerator-Broad Area Announcement Next STEP-3 Appendix A-Final Solicitation are due by Oct. 8 at 5 p.m. EDT. The agency does not plan to hold an industry day exchange. [Aviation Week].

Sept. 9 – European Space Agency Signs Agreement with Vast for Historic First Greek Astronaut Mission as Part of the Sixth Private Astronaut Mission to the International Space Station in Partnership with NASA: At the International Space Summit in Paris, France, the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, joined the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, on stage to announce that the European Space Agency (ESA), on behalf of Greece, has signed an agreement with Vast for the Vast-PAM-1 mission to the International Space Station in partnership with NASA. The mission is expected to be Greece's first crewed mission to space, sending the first Greek citizen to orbit. [Vast].

Sept. 11 – 25 years ago, a NASA astronaut witnessed the tragic 9/11 attacks from space. Here's what he saw: Frank Culbertson had a birds-eye view of one of the most memorable and tragic events in

American history. The NASA astronaut was the only American off of Earth on Sept. 11, 2001. He was circling the planet aboard the International Space Station (ISS) when terrorists flew commercial jets into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, killing more than 2,700 people. The ISS passed over New York shortly after the attacks took place, so Culbertson saw the devastation from an eerie remove. He shared his thoughts with Mission Control at NASA's Johnson Space Center in real time, chronicling the tragedy like no one else could. [Space.com].

Sept. 14 – NASA Welcomes Djibouti as Newest Artemis Accords Signatory: The Republic of Djibouti became the 72nd nation and eighth African country to sign the Artemis Accords during a ceremony Monday at NASA Headquarters in Washington. The Artemis Accords are the first set of practical principles aimed at enhancing transparency, safety, and coordination among nations as they explore the Moon, Mars, and beyond. [NASA].

Sept. 16 – Russia launches Progress 96 with 3 tons of cargo to the International Space Station: Russia launched a cargo mission toward the International Space Station today (Sept. 16), delivering the freighter spacecraft to orbit for a three-day rendezvous journey. The robotic Progress 96 spacecraft lifted off atop a Soyuz rocket from the Russian-run Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan today at 9:33 a.m. EDT (1333 GMT). From engine ignition through solar array deployment on the spacecraft, the Progress 96 launch was completely nominal. It was "a flawless launch," said NASA's Rob Navias during the mission's livestream this morning, with "an excellent climb to orbit by the Soyuz booster." [Space.com].

Sept. 18 – NASA Awards SpaceX Three Crew Flights to Space Station: To continue regular crew transportation to the International Space Station, NASA has awarded SpaceX three additional missions through a contract modification. As part of the agency's Commercial Crew Transportation Capability (CCtCap) contract, this change brings the total missions for SpaceX to 17 and helps NASA to maintain access to the space station with two unique commercial crew industry partners. This is a firm fixed-price, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract modification for the Crew-15, Crew-16, and Crew-17. The value of this modification for all three missions and related mission services is \$946 million. The amount includes ground, launch, in-orbit, and return and recovery operations, cargo transportation for each mission, and a lifeboat capability while docked to the International Space Station. The period of performance runs through 2030, with mission readiness dates in 2027 and 2028, and brings the total CCtCap contract value with SpaceX to \$5.92 billion. [NASA].

Sept. 23 – Vast Establishes Lunar Programs Division, Applying Haven Flight Heritage to Power, Communications, and Habitats on the Moon: Vast, the company building next-generation space infrastructure, today announced that it has established a Lunar Programs division. Leveraging its commercial space station and satellite development heritage, Vast Lunar Programs is dedicated to helping advance NASA's vision for a permanently crewed Moon Base. [Vast]; [Hype/Space]; [AviationWeek].

Sept. 23 – Italy to Spend Over \$5 Billion to Send Two Astronauts to the Moon: According to NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman, Italy has committed more than \$5 billion to the development of a lunar habitat for the agency's Moon Base programme. In return, the country has secured spots for two Italian astronauts on future missions to the surface of the Moon. Speaking during the Air & Space Forces Association's Air, Space & Cyber Conference on 15 September, Isaacman cited Italy's contribution to NASA's lunar exploration programme as an example of what he described as a "good deal" with an international partner. The centrepiece of that contribution is the Multi-Purpose Habitat (MPH), a pressurised lunar habitat module being developed by Thales Alenia Space under an Italian Space Agency (ASI) contract for future long-duration missions to the Moon. "They're committing over \$5 billion to building one of the first habitation modules," Isaacman said. "It likely will be the first real habitation module that makes its way to the lunar surface. And as a result, you're going to see two Italian astronauts on the surface of the Moon." [EuropeanSpaceflight].

Sept. 28 – China prepares to send first Pakistani astronaut to Tiangong space station: Two Pakistani pilots are undergoing Mandarin study, centrifuge training and simulated weightlessness as China nears a decision on which will become the first Pakistani astronaut to visit Tiangong. The mission would deepen China-Pakistan space cooperation and extend Beijing's international astronaut program. [Hype/Space].

Sept. 29 – Côte d'Ivoire Signs Artemis Accords as African Participation Expands: Côte d'Ivoire has signed the Artemis Accords, the fifth African country to join in 2026, as the framework expands across the continent. [SpaceWatchGlobal]; [NASA].

Sept. 30 – NASA's SpaceX Crew-13 Launches to International Space Station: Four crew members of NASA's SpaceX Crew-13 mission launched at 11:10 a.m. EDT Thursday from Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida for a science expedition aboard the International Space Station. "Crew-13 is another demonstration of America's unmatched capability in human spaceflight and the strength of our commercial partnerships," said NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman. "Jessica, Luke, Joshua, and Sergey will carry forward important work aboard the International Space Station while helping us build the experience and capabilities needed for ambitious missions to the Moon and beyond. Congratulations to the crew and the NASA and SpaceX teams who made today's launch possible." A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket propelled a Dragon spacecraft into orbit carrying NASA astronauts Jessica Watkins and Luke Delaney, CSA (Canadian Space Agency) astronaut Joshua Kutryk, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Sergey Teteryatnikov. The spacecraft will dock autonomously to the forward port of the station's Harmony module at approximately 7 p.m., making it the fastest launch-to-docking by a U.S. spacecraft in the history of the International Space Station. [NASA]; [SpaceNews].

Wisdom, Justice, Moderation

Est scientia virtus et cognitum potestasque.

The information contained herein is for informative purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice; nor does such information in any way reflect the personal or professional views of the firm and/or the editors. While the editors attempt to include only accurate and multiple-source-verified information herein, no claims to accuracy are made and the information is subject to change, retraction, and/or error. The information contained herein is not to be used for business purposes and may be subject to original copyright and no claims of ownership are asserted. To learn more about the legal services offered at Mozley, Finlayson, & Loggins, LLP, please visit www.mfllaw.com.

Sept. 2026