



Merlin Designated a New Zealand Part 146 Aircraft Design Organization, Advancing Its Path to Commercial Operations

August 24, 2026

This certification from the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand allows Merlin to internally approve certain aircraft design changes, streamlining the design approval process

BOSTON, Aug. 24, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Merlin, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: MRLN), an aerospace and defense technology company building the operating system of record for autonomous flight, today announced it has received a Part 146 Aircraft Design Organization certificate from the [Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand](#) (CAANZ).

Merlin's own engineers holding delegation authority can now approve certain aircraft design changes that previously had to be routed through outside design organizations, narrowing the gap between design engineering and an aircraft certified for commercial operations.

In aviation, revenue operations utilizing new designs and technology require both engineering progress and regulatory review and approval. The ability for a qualified Merlin engineer to approve and sign off on design changes within the scope agreed with CAANZ converts what was previously an external cost and schedule risk into internal capacity.

The Aircraft Design Organization certificate is not tied to a single aircraft or program. It reflects Merlin's standing capability as a qualified organization with an established design control system and an engineering team whose competency CAANZ has assessed. That foundation carries from one program to the next, with the scope of delegated work agreed with CAANZ for each certification project. The certificate supports Merlin's broader strategic vision for operations in New Zealand.

"We're building one autonomy stack that goes on many aircraft, which means the cost of certifying the next one matters more than the cost of certifying the first," said Matt George, CEO, Merlin. "Owning the capability to deliver design approval is how that curve bends. It's a meaningful capability, not a side benefit."

An Aircraft Design Organization certification requires CAANZ to assess an engineering organization's personnel qualifications, facilities, equipment, tools and data, safety management and design control systems and procedures, continued airworthiness and recordkeeping procedures, and to accept a formal exposition governing how design work is performed. In granting it, CAANZ determined that Merlin met its standards, and had earned the privilege and authority to perform approved design activities under the Part 146 framework.

"A regulator doesn't delegate design authority to an organization it hasn't examined closely," said Tim Burns, Chief Technology Officer, Merlin. "CAANZ assessed how we qualify our engineers, how our processes work, and how we hold ourselves accountable, then concluded we could carry that responsibility. That's a durable statement about the quality and maturity of our engineering organization and process."

The certificate builds on Merlin's recent certification progress, including [achieving Stage of Involvement \(SOI\) 3](#) for its AI-powered natural language processing and full flight autonomy system and concluding a key issue paper governing the certification approach of AI/ML-based natural language processing capabilities.

About Merlin

Merlin is an aerospace and defense technology company building the operating system of record for autonomous flight. Through a first-principles approach, the company is redefining what's possible across aviation, aerospace, and defense with the goal of delivering full-stack autonomy for any aircraft, military or civilian, from takeoff to touchdown. The Merlin Pilot system powers a growing range of aircraft and mission profiles, proven through hundreds of autonomous flights from test facilities across the globe. With \$105M in IDIQ contract ceiling value under its C-130J autonomy program with USSOCOM, Merlin is advancing American leadership in autonomous aviation. To learn more, visit www.merlinlabs.com or follow us on X @merlinaero.

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements other than statements of historical fact should be considered forward-looking statements, including without limitation statements regarding the anticipated benefits of the Part 146 Design Organization Approval, including its expected effect on

Merlin Designated a Part 146 Aircraft Design Organization, Advancing its Path to Commercial Operations



Cockpit of Merlin aircraft

Merlin's design and certification timelines and its ability to reduce time to revenue; the timing, progress, and outcome of Merlin's certification program for the Merlin Pilot; and Merlin's business strategy, growth prospects, and future operating results. These forward-looking statements are based on our current expectations, assumptions, and projections about future events and trends. These forward-looking statements are neither promises nor guarantees, but involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements, including without limitation the risks and uncertainties detailed under the section entitled "Risk Factors" of our final prospectus, dated May 13, 2026, filed with the SEC on May 13, 2026, and our subsequently filed Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, which are available from the SEC. Except as required by applicable law, we undertake no obligation to update any of these forward-looking statements after the date of this press release.

Media Contact

Kristen Georgette

617-842-6064

merlin@pluckpr.com

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/fda06ee3-9a9a-460e-8b51-1592f4ab0768>