Merlin Expands Flight Operations with Move to North Central State Airport

October 20, 2026

The new Smithfield, Rhode Island facility provides additional hangar capacity for Merlin's expanding fleet, including the addition of a Beechcraft King Air and L-39 Albatros, and flight test program

Merlin Aircraft



Merlin's Cessna 208 Caravan and L-39 Albatros at North Central State Airport hangar

BOSTON, Oct. 20, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Merlin, Inc. (NASDAQ: MRLN), an aerospace and defense technology company building the operating system of record for autonomous flight, today announced that it has moved its U.S. flight operations to North Central State Airport in Smithfield, Rhode Island. The move provides the additional hangar capacity and operational flexibility needed to support Merlin's expanding aircraft fleet and growing flight testing requirements. As part of the transition to North Central, the company has concluded its flight operations at Quonset State Airport.

Merlin's expanding fleet includes a Beechcraft King Air, which was first flown by the Merlin Pilot this month, as well as an L-39 Albatros, the company's first owned jet aircraft. The L-39 represents an important opportunity to extend the Merlin Pilot autonomy platform toward tactical mission profiles and other high performance military missions. Together with Merlin's work on the Cessna 208 Caravan and Lockheed Martin C-130J Super Hercules, these platform integrations give the company a representative range of airframes spanning single- and twin-engine platforms, a military transport aircraft, and a jet. This breadth enables Merlin to mature a versatile autonomy platform across aircraft types and missions its customers operate every day.

"Flight testing is central to everything we do, and our infrastructure needs to grow alongside our technology and aircraft fleet," said Matt George, CEO and founder of Merlin. "North Central State Airport gives us the space and operational flexibility we need for our evolving flight test programs, while bringing these critical operations closer to our Boston headquarters and growing team. This move reflects the momentum Merlin has built and our continued investment in the region."

Merlin's broader vision is to help establish the greater Boston area as a hub for aviation autonomy. Expanding the region's hangar, flight testing, and operational capacity is critical to building that ecosystem and advancing the next generation of autonomous aircraft. The company's growing regional presence is also expected to support continued job creation and provide access to the Northeast's deep pool of aerospace, engineering, and technology talent. That talent base will be essential as Merlin expands its team and develops increasingly sophisticated autonomous flight 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 $100M+ total 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 expected benefits of the move to North Central State Airport; our ability to support our expanding aircraft fleet and growing flight testing requirements; our ability to mature our autonomy platform across aircraft types and missions; our vision to establish the greater Boston area as a hub for aviation autonomy and the expected related job creation and access to talent; and our goal of delivering full-stack autonomy for any aircraft. 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.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/64f0e2e2-8728-4711-a72a-5553bcb3c82a