



Paper Aircraft Released Into Space

The Register's high-altitude ballooning project, aiming to reach new heights in paper-based aeronautical technology



Mission summary

The PARIS mission includes two main components: the main payload and the Vulture 1 aircraft. The main payload is a styrofoam box containing video and stills cameras, GPS tracker unit, back-up beacon transmitter and the all-important Vulture 1 release mechanism.

Vulture 1 - an all-paper aircraft - sits under the main payload, and both are lifted by a helium-filled meteorological balloon. At 20,000 metres, Vulture 1 is released to fly to earth, tracked by an onboard GPS radio system. The plane also carries a miniature stills camera to record its journey.

The main payload continues to ascend to around 30,000 metres, at which point the balloon bursts and the box descends by parachute.

Two tracking teams will follow and recover the main payload and Vulture 1. The main payload GPS transmits its location over the phone network. If that fails, there's a back-up beacon transmitting in morse.

Vulture 1's position is plotted live online via the OpenAPRS system. The main payload also offers live positional updates via a dedicated Google map.

Basic set-up

