

NASA facility launch site for GlobalFlyer

December 21 2005

The Kennedy Space Center in Florida will be the takeoff site for an attempt to set the record for the longest flight of an aircraft or balloon.

NASA and Virgin Atlantic Airways' agreement to use Kennedy's Space Shuttle Landing Facility is the result of a pilot program to expand access to the shuttle's runway for non-NASA activities.

An exact takeoff date for Virgin Atlantic's GlobalFlyer aircraft has not yet been set and is contingent on weather conditions. The flight is expected to take place in February.

Steve Fossett will attempt to fly solo around the world, non-stop and without refueling, in an aircraft designed by Burt Rutan. It is scheduled to arrive at Kennedy Jan. 6 for preflight preparations.

The GlobalFlyer is a single pilot, ultra light aircraft designed for non-stop global circumnavigation. The plane will fly mostly at 45,000 feet at speeds faster than 285 mph.

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