

Navy completes 1st unmanned carrier landing (Update)

July 10 2013, by Brock Vergakis



A Navy X-47B drone is launched off the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush off the coast of Virginia, in this May 14, 2013 file photo. The Navy says the X-47B experimental aircraft will try to land aboard the USS George H.W. Bush on Wednesday July 10, 2013. (AP Photo/Steve Helber, File)

The U.S. Navy says it has landed a drone the size of a fighter jet on an aircraft carrier for the first time.

The X-47B experimental aircraft made the landing Wednesday afternoon, a milestone that showcases the military's capability to have a computer program perform one of the most difficult tasks a pilot is asked to do.

The Navy can now move forward with plans to develop another unmanned aircraft that can provide around-the-clock surveillance while also possessing strike capability.

Critics in the U.S. and abroad have charged that drone strikes cause widespread civilian deaths and are conducted with inadequate oversight. Still, defense analysts say drones are the future of warfare.

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