French inventor soars above Champs-Elysees on flyboard at Paris parade: AFP

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Zapata CEO Franky Zapata flies a jet-powered hoverboard or "Flyboard" over the Bastille Day military parade in central Paris

A French inventor and entrepreneur on Sunday soared above the Champs-Elysees on a turbine engine-powered flyboard in front of President Emmanuel Macron and other EU leaders.

Former jet-skiing champion Franky Zapata, grasping a rifle in a sign of the possible military uses of his device, took to the air in a futuristic

showpiece of the annual Bastille Day parade, an AFP reporter said.

French Armed Forces Minister Florence Parly told France Inter radio ahead of the parade that the flyboard "can allow tests for different kinds of uses, for example as a flying logistical platform or, indeed, as an assault platform."

Zapata, who first developed his device flying above water, says that the flyboard has the power to take off and reach speeds up to 190 kilometres an hour (118 mph) and run for 10 minutes.

He is now eyeing a crossing of the English Channel which, for the first time, will require a refuelling in mid-flight.

Zapata aims to make the crossing on July 25, 110 years to the day after pioneering aviator Louis Bleriot made the first airplane flight across the Channel.

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