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An aerospace company has built a prototype of a driverless aircraft designed to shuttle hundreds of pounds of supplies to soldiers in war zones.

Dubbed a flying Humvee by Ryan Wood, CEO of Broomfield Colo.-based [Frontline Aerospace](#), the robotic vehicle can fly 600 to 1,000 miles carrying a full cargo of 400 pounds. Code named V-STAR, the [autonomous aircraft](#), which can execute vertical take-offs and landings, is about the size of a large SUV, weighing in at 2,400 pounds and measuring 21 feet long and up to 26 feet wide.

Wood said he foresees a soldier hunkered down in a military hot zone in need of ammunition or fuel. Instead of calling for a manned force to move the supplies to him, he opens his laptop and punches in his request. The V-Star then is loaded up and flies the supplies in without risking other lives or jamming up needed troops.

"Logistics is what's winning the war in many ways in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Wood. "[Logistics] is the ultimate weapon - being able to deliver supplies, parts, food, fuel, water or troops. Without even water, in a few days, troops stop. The V-Star allows you to keep moving to your target without slowing down to be resupplied. "

The United States military already uses unmanned aircraft, such as the [RQ-1 Predator](#), which is designed to take pictures and video during surveillance and reconnaissance missions. And MQ-1B Predators are designed to carry missiles. The V-Star, however, is the first autonomous aircraft to actually carry cargo or troops, according to Wood.

"It's like a flying truck," said Wood.

Frontline Aerospace tested the prototype in the Naval Research Lab's wind tunnel, he added. He noted that the Army, Marines and Navy have shown an interest in the aircraft. The V-Star will cost US\$4 million each in volume production, said Wood. For large-scale deployments, any military branch would need Congressional approval.

Wood said a half-size aircraft is expected to be ready next year, but a full-size V-Star is not slated to ship until 2010.