

Airbus sets sights on stratosphere with Minden glider flight

By AFP

MINDEN – Airbus on May 7 completed a test flight of a glider set to eventually travel to the edge of space, in a pioneering step into the stratosphere.

The Perlan 2's flight, from an airstrip in Minden, took place two hours after the planned 1:45pm start time due to heavy rain.

“It was short,” said chief executive Tom Enders, who served as co-pilot, said after exiting the plane. “Because of the clouds, we couldn't see any more otherwise we would still be up there.”

The flight, part of a series in recent months from the mountainous area just east of Lake Tahoe, aims to test how well an aircraft and its crew can fare in conditions similar to those on Mars, with extremely thin atmosphere and bitterly cold temperatures.

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