



**ROYAL  
AERONAUTICAL  
SOCIETY**

## ***Farnborough Branch Lecture***

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**Tuesday, 15 January 2013, 7.30pm**  
BAE Systems Park Centre, Farnborough

### **Varialift Airships**

**Alan Handley and Ernesto Soria**

Varialift Airships plc



Varialift airships are envisaged as extremely large rigid body air vehicles, intended for ultra heavy airlift applications. The lecture will explain the technical principles underlying this novel concept which would take cargo airlift into a completely new dimension. The methods of construction and developments to date will be described and the proposed path to practical exploitation outlined. The all-aluminium craft are planned to be available in two sizes, the largest being designed to transport loads of up to 1000 tonnes and 250 metres long, over very long distances (up to 8000 nm), at speeds of up to 200kt and altitudes up to 20000 ft. The intention is for these airships to be able to operate on costs up to 80% less than the cost to purchase and operate an equivalent payload aircraft.

***Please note that this lecture is a change from that originally advertised***

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*Alan Handley is the CEO of Varialift Airships plc. Prior to this, he has spent 45 years in the heavy lift equipment field, designing bespoke process lines and equipment for the steel and mining industries, encompassing the handling of all types of heavy loads. This has given him extensive experience in the design, fabrication and welding in steel and aluminium, as well as pneumatics, hydraulics, electrical control systems and the use of programmable controllers. For the past nine years he has worked on variable buoyancy and heavy lift in airships, bringing in new ideas and now owns the IP and Patents for Varialift Airships in Europe and the US.*

*Ernesto Soria graduated from the University of Reading with a Masters in Engineering and has since pursued a career in the high tech hardware and software field. He has directed business development and technology transfer for a number of public and private financial and industrial institutions. He holds a private pilot's licence.*

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*Complimentary coffee served from 7.0pm  
£1 entry fee for non-members. RAeS members, Farnborough Branch 'Friends' and students: free.*