Dakota UAS Launch and Recovery Procedure

The Dakota UAS as operated by the Space Dynamics Laboratory is launched and recovered under command of an external pilot (R/C operator) from a conventional runway. The external pilot receives airspeed and altitude call-outs from the internal pilot (ground station operator) during launch and recovery. The ground station receives this information (along with engine temperature, bus voltage, GPS navigation status and other parameters) from the air vehicle via data link. Typically pilot in command (PIC) is transferred from the external pilot to the internal pilot at 300-500’ AGL. Command is then taken back by the external pilot as the aircraft enters downwind for recovery, or any time the air vehicle is within visual range and the external pilot decides it is necessary or desirable to do so.