

Skyguide and AirMap Deploy Low-Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) for Drone Flights in Geneva and Lugano

Geneva/Madrid, March 12, 2019 - Skyguide, the Swiss air navigation service provider, and AirMap, the leading global airspace management platform for drones, announced today the launch of a trial phase for automated flight authorizations and other U-space services for integrating drones into the Swiss national airspace.

As part of the trial phase, selected drone operators in Switzerland can request automated and manual flight authorization to fly in two airspaces controlled by skyguide (CTR) in the city of Lugano and the canton of Geneva through the skyguide U-space mobile application, provided by AirMap, as well as AirMap APIs integrated in third-party applications.

The skyguide automated and manual flight authorization service builds upon experience gained with the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) successful Low-Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) program. Commercial drone operators in the United States can use the AirMap mobile application to request ATC authorization to fly in controlled airspace within seconds. The trial phase announced today represents the first instantiation of a fully automated digital authorization service for drone flights outside of the United States, similar to FAA LAANC.

"The trial phase enables us to gain vital information and experience with selected users live in the field and therefore to make sure that this pioneering system is running smoothly and reliably when launched in June," stated Robert Fraefel, U-Space project lead at skyguide.

The trial phase will also test U1, U2 and some U3 services including E-registration, E-identification, Pre-tactical geofencing, Flight Planning, Real time Traffic and Tracking, Dynamic Geofencing, Communications and Emergency services, and more powered by the AirMap UTM Platform and integrated into skyguide infrastructure for fully operational drone traffic management.

"Digital and automated airspace authorization is a critical enabler for scaling high-value drone operations," said Ben Marcus, AirMap co-founder and Chairman. "We've experienced this first-hand through our work with the FAA in the United States, and we are proud to be working with skyguide to bring this capability to the Swiss drone community."

Matternet, developer of the world's leading autonomous drone logistics platform, is one of the operators participating in the trial. Today, Matternet and Swiss Post, the national postal service of Switzerland, use drones to transport time-sensitive medical laboratory samples beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) between two hospitals in Lugano, supported by Swiss U-space.

The Swiss U-space platform includes an open interface enabling multiple U-space Service Providers to connect to core U-space services provided by skyguide Flight Information Management System (FIMS) to promote an open and competitive drone economy.

Together with the Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA) in Switzerland, skyguide and AirMap have developed the Swiss U-space reference architecture, which was contributed to SESAR JU's European U-space standardization effort to promote an open industry platform for drone traffic management.

The trial phase follows the announcement of a partnership between skyguide and AirMap in March 2018 to develop and deploy the first national drone traffic management system in Europe.

Skyguide plans to officially launch the Swiss U-space in June of 2019.

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Skyguide is responsible for providing air navigation services in Switzerland and in certain adjacent parts of neighbouring countries. With its workforce of some 1 500 employees who are active at 14 locations in Switzerland, skyguide safely and reliably guides some 1.3 million civil and military flights a year through Europe's busiest airspace. Skyguide is well integrated into the international air navigation services community and, with its innovative and customer-minded solutions, helps enhance Switzerland's appeal as a place to live, work and do business. The company is majority-owned by the Swiss Confederation, and is headquartered in Geneva.
