



EUROPEAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY CREATED BY INMARSAT AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT OF CATALONIA

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World-first agreement between a company and a commercial airport, the regional Government of Catalonia has joined with Inmarsat Velaris Partner Network to transform Lleida-Alguaire Airport into a European centre of excellence for advancing Air Traffic Management and Uncrewed Traffic Management innovation. Situated approximately 5 miles (8 kilometres) from the city of Lleida, Lleida-Alguaire Airport is making its runway, full aerodrome and air traffic control services available to ground-breaking advanced air mobility research programmes. With recent estimates anticipating 40 times more commercial uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) will be flying beyond visual line-of-sight by 2030 than commercial aircraft, Lleida stands to make a significant and positive contribution towards alleviating the air traffic capacity crunch.

With its new status as a centre of excellence, the airport's partnership with Inmarsat will drive investment and bring more businesses to the local economy of Lleida and the wider region by attracting the aeronautical industry to the area – leading to job creation in the region. As part of Inmarsat's Velaris Partner Network, a consortium of partners will offer their research expertise to the hub, fostering international cooperation throughout Europe

and beyond.

Designed and developed specifically for the commercial Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) sector, Inmarsat Velaris combines a reliable and totally scalable Command and Control (C2) service with transformative software and services from the Inmarsat Velaris Partners, made up of some of the biggest names in the industry.

By bringing together research of ATM and UTM technologies, and integrating it with the aeronautical industry, regulators and local government, Inmarsat and Lleida-Alguaire Airport can deliver on their shared goal of bringing societal, environmental and commercial benefits of advanced air mobility to the region.

Anthony Spouncer, Inmarsat's Senior Director of UAVs and UTM, said: "Inmarsat's partnership with the Government of Catalonia and Lleida-Alguaire Airport marks a significant step forward in the development and testing of advanced air mobility solutions. By focusing on unification of airspace, we want to turn concepts into tangible realities that have real-world benefits. There is no time to waste when it comes to bringing our airspace into the future. As our consortium grows, we hope to welcome more partners as we establish Lleida-Alguaire as a world-leading facility."

In a move from theory to practice, research conducted by Inmarsat and its partners will take place in instalments up to four times per year in the form of real-life, practical demonstrations, as opposed to theoretical whitepapers and academic study, and will have numerous real-world applications. The efforts made to transform tests and theories into fully-fledged technologies will help to alleviate the major issues facing the aviation industry, particularly the capacity crunch and the problem of fragmented airspace.

Jordi Candela, General Director Aeroports de Catalunya, added: "Lleida-Alguaire Airport's new status as a centre of excellence for advanced air mobility will place it at the forefront of technological innovation within Catalonia, Europe, and the aeronautical industry. Being a part of Inmarsat's Velaris Partner Network will ensure that the centre can access a vast network of experts dedicated to a common goal: developing technology that will transform the future of both ATM and UTM. The expertise we'll be able to benefit from, and develop ourselves, will be critical to the future of the aviation industry – and we look forward to making this a reality."

23 JUNE 2022

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