

Press release

Droniq and Aerobits agree to work together on standards for drone tracking

Stuttgart, 18 September 2019 – Droniq and the Polish company Aerobits signed a memorandum of understanding at Intergeo/Interaerial Solutions 2019 in Stuttgart, Germany. Droniq is a joint venture between the German air navigation service provider DFS Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS) and Deutsche Telekom, the German-based telecommunications company. The objective of the partnership between Droniq and Aerobits is to develop European standards for the hardware required to track drones using a UAS traffic management system (UTM).

By equipping drones with a special LTE modem, known as the hook-on device (HOD), Droniq has developed a solution to answer the question of how unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) can be made visible in airspace. This device continuously sends the drone's position over Deutsche Telekom's mobile communications network to the UTM system of DFS. The new generation of hook-on devices have more expanded capabilities. They can receive FLARM (flight alarm) and ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast) and forward these position data to the UTM. These collision avoidance systems are used by sailplanes, powered aircraft and helicopters that fly in uncontrolled airspace under visual flight rules. This way, drone pilots always have a precise overview of all flight movements in their vicinity.

Hook-on device also transmits the position of the UAS via FLARM

The hook-on device can transmit its own position data via FLARM, so a glider pilot near a drone equipped with such a device, for example, will automatically receive a warning in the cockpit even if they are not using the UTM. "This new development delivers a maximum level of safety in very low-level airspace and is a central step towards safety for all airspace users," said Jan-Eric Putze, CEO of Droniq.

Exclusive partnership with Aerobits

Currently, there are no technical standards at the national or European level for the tracking of drones. By signing the memorandum of understanding and agreeing on an exclusive partnership, Droniq and Aerobits are driving work in this area forward. "The decisive factors in our decision were in particular Aerobits' combination of technical knowledge, aviation expertise and speed of implementation," said Ralph Schepp, Droniq's COO. Different variants of the hook-on device will be developed as part of the partnership. One will have a fixed housing and another will be an OEM version for drone manufacturers, which can be fitted directly onto the aircraft.

"Reducing the size and weight of hardware so that they can be used in drones is a fundamental step for us to integrate drones into airspace. That is why Aerobits is such a valuable partner for Droniq," said Thilo Vogt, Droniq's Head of Sales and Business Development.

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Droniq GmbH is headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and is a joint venture between DFS Deutsche Flugsicherung GmbH (DFS) and Deutsche Telekom AG. The object of the company is the provision, distribution and marketing of services for drones and other aircraft in Europe. DFS holds a stake of 51 percent through its subsidiary DFS International Business Services GmbH, while Deutsche Telekom holds a stake of 49 percent through Telekom Innovation Pool GmbH. www.droniq.de

Aerobits Sp. Z o.o. is a Polish company that has its headquarters in Szczecin, Poland. It was set up in 2017 and is specialised in the miniaturisation of avionics. This is of central importance to be able to integrate UAS into airspace and enable the setting up of UTM and U-Space services. www.aerobits.pl

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