Kea Aerospace Selects SKYTRAC BVLOS Command and Control Capability Onboard High-Altitude UAV Platform through Iridium Certus®

ORLANDO, FL, APRIL 28, 2022 – SKYTRAC Systems Ltd. (SKYTRAC), a global leader in aerospace intelligent connectivity and satellite communications (Satcom), today announced that Kea Aerospace, a New Zealand based developer of solar-powered High Altitude and Long Endurance (HALE) unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), has selected SKYTRAC's midband Iridium Certus Satcom terminal to be installed onboard their HALE UAV platform, Kea Atmos.

Kea Atmos is a solar-powered, remotely piloted fixed-wing aircraft designed and capable of continuous flight in the stratosphere to collect frequent high-resolution aerial images. After takeoff, Kea Atmos ascends to an altitude of 65,000 ft where it will operate for several months at a time. The UAV will carry payloads that will acquire high-value data for Kea Aerospace's customers.

"We operate in the stratosphere because it is a sweet spot for cost-effective and high-resolution aerial imaging, but it comes with its own challenge of operating Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS)," mentions Mark Rocket, CEO of Kea Aerospace. "SKYTRAC's Iridium Certus service provides the low latency BVLOS Command and Control capability that we need to develop a safe, efficient and sustainable means of conducting aerial imaging."

To remotely pilot their aircraft in the stratosphere, Kea Aerospace has selected SKYTRAC's UAV Data Link System (DLS-100) to enable BVLOS Command and Control capability. By utilizing the Iridium satellite network, the DLS-100 will provide Kea Atmos global Satcom connectivity with 99.9% uptime reliability regardless of weather conditions or the aircraft's distance from the Ground Control Station (GCS).

Enabling 22 Kbps uplink and 88 Kbps downlink speeds as well as photo transfer capabilities, the DLS-100 midband transceiver will also assist in the real-time transmission of imagery and fleet data to support Kea Aerospace in having efficient mission operations.

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"The ruggedized DLS-100 is optimized for Size, Weight, and Power (SWaP) making it suitable for a variety of platforms including Kea Aerospace's state-of-the-art Kea Atmos," says Jeff Sherwood, Director of Business Development at SKYTRAC. "We are proud to provide the reliable and global Satcom connectivity required to leverage the full extent of benefits that autonomous vehicles provide to various applications, including surveying and aerial imaging."

For more information on SKYTRAC products and capabilities, please contact sales@skytrac.ca or visit SKYTRAC.ca

About SKYTRAC

SKYTRAC is aviation's full-service, data-driven solutions provider serving the fixed-wing, rotorcraft, and unmanned aviation markets. Since 1986, SKYTRAC has pioneered the development, evolution and commercialization of flight following, flight data and communications technology. Today, with systems certified on over 900 airframes and an online data management portal that is the go-to tool for over 7,500 global users, SKYTRAC is truly the partner of choice for data-guided business insights. From performance trending and operations reporting to real-time asset tracking and situational awareness – SKYTRAC offers a one-stop response to meeting more of your company's needs. For more information, visit www.SKYTRAC.ca.

About KEA Aerospace

Kea Aerospace was formed in 2018. Located in Christchurch, New Zealand the company is focused on developing innovative aerospace technology and building the local aerospace ecosystem. Kea Aerospace is developing a solar-powered, remotely piloted aircraft that will fly continuously in the stratosphere for months at a time to collect frequent high-resolution aerial images. The Kea Atmos is a solar-powered, remotely piloted aircraft that will fly for months at a time. It will operate at an altitude of 65,000 ft (20 kilometres), in the stratosphere, carrying payloads that will acquire high-value data for our customers.

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