

## Platform Aerospace Selects SKYTRAC to Provide Iridium Certus Connectivity Onboard Record-Setting Vanilla UAV



**KELOWNA, BC, November 15, 2021** – SKYTRAC Systems Ltd. ([SKYTRAC](#)), a global leader in intelligent connectivity solutions for aviation, today announced that [Platform Aerospace](#), an industry leader in unmanned aircraft systems, used SKYTRAC's Iridium Certus Satcom system, to enable [Command and Control \(C2\)](#), [Beyond Visual Line of Sight \(BVLOS\) communications](#), and telemetry streaming onboard their record-setting Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), [Vanilla Unmanned](#).

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Platform Aerospace launched Vanilla Unmanned and recovered the UAV 8 days, 50 minutes, and 47 seconds later on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, breaking the [FAI](#) world record for unrefueled, internal combustion endurance of an unmanned aircraft. As a long endurance Group III Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) used for multi-day surveillance and inspection operations, this is a significant milestone for Vanilla Unmanned.

Vanilla Unmanned, contracted by NASA, successfully fielded the University of Kansas' snow radar within the Arctic Circle to collect data on snow and ice thickness. Platform Aerospace selected and tested SKYTRAC's Iridium Certus mid-band datalink, the [DLS-100](#), to enable BVLOS Command and Control (C2) and telemetry capabilities for this mission.

"Maintaining aircraft C2 during BVLOS flight operations has been challenging since many datalink solutions are limited by range or geographic coverage," mentions Dr. Dan Edwards, Chief Technology Officer at Platform Aerospace. "This flight in the Arctic

demonstrated SKYTRAC's global coverage, resiliency to extreme weather, and provided a low SWaP solution for connectivity onboard our ultra-long high endurance UAV missions."

By leveraging Iridium's global connectivity and low latency, the DLS-100 supported the polar mission by enabling pilots from Ground Control Stations (GCS) to have real-time C2 with the UAV while simultaneously sending commands and receiving flight telemetry that ensured safe BVLOS operations.

With this successful mission, SKYTRAC has supported the first UAV flight with Certus using the DLS-100 and has expanded the use cases of Platform Aerospace's Vanilla Unmanned for geospatial surveying in polar or remote regions, minimizing the risk to human life during such operations.

"Congratulations to the Platform Aerospace team for their record-breaking flight," mentions Jeff Sherwood, Director of Business Development at SKYTRAC. "We are proud that our solutions are being used to extend the boundaries of what is possible with UAVs."

For more information on SKYTRAC's products and services, please visit Booth B116 at European Rotors 2021 from November 16<sup>th</sup> to November 18<sup>th</sup> or contact [sales@skytrac.ca](mailto:sales@skytrac.ca) to speak with a technical expert.

#### **About SKYTRAC Systems Ltd.**

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](http://www.SKYTRAC.ca).

#### **About Platform Aerospace**

Platform Aerospace is a service-disabled veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB) dedicated to supporting the warfighter and its customers' success. Platform is AS9100D and ISO 9001:2015 certified, and specializes in manufacturing, aviation modification and prototyping, and cutting-edge aerial ISR products.

#### **About Vanilla Unmanned**

Owned and operated by Platform Aerospace, Vanilla Unmanned is a World Record setting ultra-long flight endurance Unmanned Air Vehicle ISR platform. Vanilla Unmanned fills an unmet requirement for multi-day surveillance and inspection operations at an attritable – or cost-effective – price point. Vanilla has demonstrated world-record endurance and is capable of multi-mission beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations providing days of time-on-target or thousands of miles of search capacity on a single flight. No other system provides the endurance, payload capacity, and cost-profile of Vanilla Unmanned.

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