PRESS RELEASE

CATEC leads the operation of Europe's first stratospheric flight of a high-altitude and long-range pseudo-satellite

- **CATEC was also responsible for the operational authorization of the flight, which was the result of an extensive and complex preparation process carried out in close collaboration with the Telespazio Ibérica drone team as the end user.**

- **This operation is part of the ISSEC project, which Telespazio Ibérica is developing in collaboration with Pegasus Aero Group under a joint venture agreement at the Fuerteventura Technology Park for sixth-generation firefighting.**

- **This milestone reinforces CATEC's position as Spain's leading UAS operator in the management, procurement, and operation of permits and complex flights with unmanned aerial platforms for third parties.**

December 17, 2025.- The stratoport located in the Fuerteventura Technology Park has successfully hosted the first high-altitude, long-range stratospheric flight in Europe with a pseudo-satellite or HAPS (High Altitude Platform System) platform, a project led by the company Telespazio Ibérica where CATEC, the Advanced Center for Aerospace Technologies, has played a key role as the flight operator for this platform and the entity responsible for the operational authorization issued by the Civil Aviation Authority (AESA) in Spain.

This authorization is the result of an **extensive and complex preparation process carried out by CATEC** in close collaboration with the Telespazio Ibérica drone team, Murzilli Consulting, and MIRA Aerospace. The operation is part of the ISSEC project, which Telespazio Ibérica is developing in collaboration with Pegasus Aero Group under a joint venture agreement at the Fuerteventura Technology Park to combat sixth-generation fires.

With this milestone, CATEC has demonstrated its leadership as a UAS operator by offering a comprehensive response to a highly complex operational and regulatory scenario. In fact, CATEC has led the management, application, and obtaining of the necessary flight permits for an operation involving multiple entities, effectively coordinating the platform operator MIRA and the end user Telespazio Ibérica. CATEC has also acted as the UAS operator for the operation, assuming the legal and operational responsibility that has allowed Telespazio to carry out the flight campaigns under the current European regulatory framework. This capability is supported by a team of professionals with more than 15 years of experience in the aeronautical and UAS sector, with high technical skills and in-depth regulatory knowledge, which has made it possible to successfully complete an operation of this complexity.

CATEC has unique experience in operations carried out both in controlled environments—including coexistence with airports—and in uncontrolled environments, such as segregated airspace. In these scenarios, the technical, operational, and regulatory complexity requires

advanced mastery of European civil regulations applicable to drones, rigorous risk management, and close coordination with the relevant aviation authorities.

These complex flights include BVLOS operations, urban environments, scenarios with critical infrastructure, coexistence with manned aviation in airport environments, and operations over the sea, which may fall under SAIL II risk levels, according with the SORA methodology.

Joaquín Rodríguez Grau, CEO of CATEC, said: "This milestone reinforces CATEC's position as the UAS operator for our customers, the leader in Spain in the management, execution and operation, for third parties, of permits and complex flights with unmanned aerial platforms. In-flight operations verify that these pseudo-satellites are functioning correctly and are useful to users, mainly for emergency services, as is the case with this initiative".

CATEC's added value lies in its comprehensive capacity to design, plan and execute this type of operation with maximum safety guarantees, as well as to take the most appropriate approach, always aimed at enabling operational authorisation in a safe environment for our clients within the current legal framework. Its activity ranges from the detailed definition of CONOPS to the planning of take-off, route, approach and landing trajectories, the analysis of the operational environment and the design of specific mitigation measures to minimise risks throughout the entire operation. This technical and methodological approach allows CATEC to transform complex operational scenarios into viable and safe operations that are fully compliant with European regulations.

All operations are carried out under the supervision of the Spanish Civil Aviation Authority (AESA)recognised for its regulatory rigour and high safety standards.

CATEC's experience as a leading operator of HAPS and UAS flights

This milestone, with the first high-altitude and long-range stratospheric flight in Europe using a pseudo-satellite, adds to CATEC's success as an operator of UAS or HAPS platforms in other previous initiatives, such as the Lilium aircraft, the BAE Systems P35 platform, and the Airbus Zephyr HAPS.

CATEC has also participated in other historic milestones in unmanned aviation, such as the first flight of a legal civil BVLOS platform in Spain, and the first flight operated with UAS systems incorporating 4G and 5G technologies in an urban environment, in Benidorm (Alicante).

About CATEC

CATEC, the Advanced Centre for Aerospace Technologies, is Spain's largest aerospace technology centre, with a staff of more than 150 engineers and technicians and four locations in Spain, two of which are its own flight test centres for unmanned systems, HAPS and drones, located in Jaén: the ATLAS centres.

Specialising in the development of technological and R&D solutions in the aeronautical sector, CATEC excels in the design and development of systems; Manned Unmanned Teaming solutions; perception and AI; sensory fusion; detect & avoid; as well as in Smart Industry and Advanced Manufacturing with Artificial Intelligence, Deep Learning, Virtual, Mixed and Augmented Reality and Industrial Metaverse; cognitive robotics; health monitoring and HUMS.

In the Space sector, CATEC has solid experience in the design and manufacture of structures and flight parts for launchers, space missions and probes, antennas, waveguides, radiating chains for space applications;

on-board data processing and downstream applications based on the use of satellite data and intelligent algorithms.

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