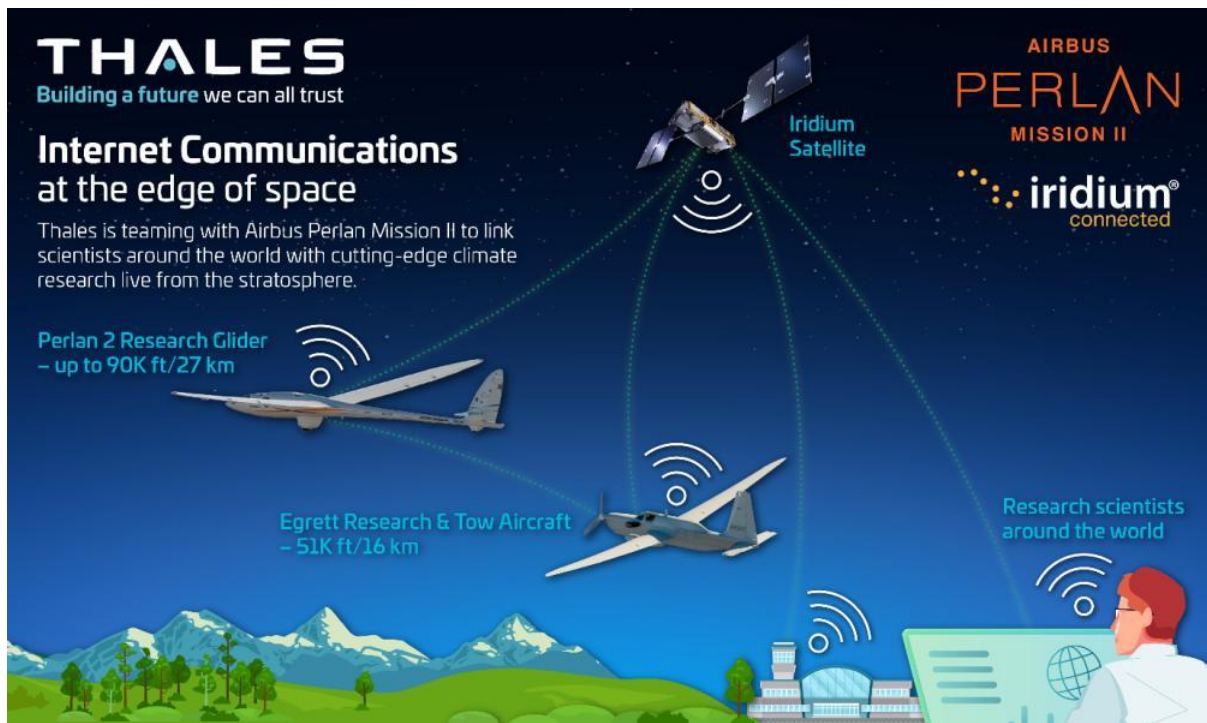


Thales to create highest ever Wi-Fi hotspot as it joins forces with Airbus Perlan Mission II stratospheric glider project



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Paris-La Défense and MINDEN, Nev., January 13th, 2022 – Thales announced today its partnership with [Airbus Perlan Mission II](#), an internationally celebrated and world record setting climate and aerospace research project, aiming to fly Thales' latest mobile Satellite communications system, FlytLink, in a zero-emission glider to more than twice the altitude of a commercial airline flight. Through this collaboration, the world will get a live, front row view of the stratosphere and hear from glider pilots as they soar to the edge of space via FlytLink. The Nevada-based Airbus Perlan Mission II team is planning for a possible return to flight this year in the U.S. and El Calafate, Argentina.

Airbus Perlan Mission II is an initiative of The Perlan Project, a non-profit, international team of scientists, engineers, and aviators. The group has already set aviation world altitude records in the experimental Perlan 2 glider, which was designed, built and deployed to fly to 90,000 feet without an engine. Originally launched in 2015, the Perlan 2 achieved its highest record-setting flight of above 76,000 feet in 2018. The organization's mission is to conduct climate, atmospheric and aeronautical research at extreme high altitudes. Applications of their research include informing more accurate climate-change models, innovating fuel-efficient or zero-emission aviation, and even demonstrating the feasibility of using energy-efficient winged aircraft on Mars.

Soaring too high to use ground-based communications, the Perlan 2 glider will be fitted with the FlytLink Thales Iridium Certus based satellite communications (satcom) system. This means that for the first time it will be possible to make a live feed available to STEM students, researchers and aviation enthusiasts around the world while the aircraft is in flight, enabling access to real-time data downloads. FlytLink is the latest generation of Iridium-based satellite communications systems for cockpit and crew operations. Anywhere in the world, whether flying over the poles, the ocean or land, FlytLink offers coverage and connectivity for critical operations. Its resilience, high dependability and low size, weight and power make it adaptable to any aircraft, including gliders such as Perlan.

“We look forward to Perlan 2 carrying the Thales logo as well as one of the company’s most cutting-edge communication solutions to even greater heights,” said Ed Warnock, CEO of The Perlan Project. “By exploring the stratosphere in an airborne research vehicle that creates zero pollution, we hope to unlock discoveries never possible before. Through this exciting partnership with Thales, we also look forward to inspiring new generations of scientists, engineers and pilots in environmentally conscious aviation.”

“We are delighted to support Airbus Perlan Mission II because we believe the project aligns with Thales’ own strategies for future, greener aviation and the environment,” said Marc Duval Destin, Vice-President Strategy, Product Policy and Innovation for Thales’ Flight Avionics activities. “We hope that the live stream will encourage a new generation of young people to consider careers in aerospace, science and engineering.”

When Perlan 2 reaches its next record-breaking target altitude of over 90,000 feet, it will be the highest a winged aircraft has ever flown in level flight. Equipped with cutting edge aviation technology and using spacecraft engineering, its glider wings can fly in less than 3% of normal air density at temperatures of minus 70 degrees Celsius approximating the atmospheric conditions on Mars.

“Our equipment will be in an unpressurised environment,” added Duval Destin. “So, this is a great opportunity for us to validate the design and performance of our solution in such extremely non-benign conditions.”

Designed to support a wide range of use cases in maritime, land mobile and aviation markets, Thales Iridium Certus based satcom solutions are already used widely among vessels and land/mobile applications to keep critical communications when it is needed at all times, anywhere on the planet.

Note to editors:

For information FlytLink visit [Thales FlytLINK | Thales Group](#)

Learn more by visiting Airbus Perlan Mission II at www.perlanproject.org.

To learn more about Iridium, visit www.iridium.com

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About Thales

Thales (Euronext Paris: HO) is a global high technology leader investing in digital and “deep tech” innovations — connectivity, big data, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and quantum technology — to build a future we can all trust, which is vital to the development of our societies. The company provides solutions, services and products that help its customers — businesses, organisations and states — in the defence, aeronautics, space, transportation and digital identity and security markets to fulfil their critical missions, by placing humans at the heart of the decision-making process.

Thales has 81,000 employees in 68 countries. In 2020, the Group generated sales of €17 billion.

About Airbus Perlan Mission II

[Airbus Perlan Mission II](#) is an initiative to fly an engineless glider to the edge of space, higher than any other winged aircraft has operated in level, controlled flight, to open up a world of new discoveries related to high-altitude flight, weather and climate change. This historic endeavor is the culmination of decades of research and engineering innovation, and the work of a tireless international team of aviators and scientists who volunteer their time and expertise for the non-profit [Perlan Project](#). Based in Minden, Nevada, the project is supported by Airbus and a group of other sponsors that includes Dennis Tito, [Weather Extreme Ltd.](#), [Thales](#), [United Technologies](#), [BRS Aerospace](#) and [Iridium](#).

Social media and press kit:

Follow the Airbus Perlan Mission II team on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/perlanproject>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/perlanproject/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/perlanproject/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/perlanproject/videos>

Press Kit: <http://bit.ly/perlanpress>

Photos/video:

This Airbus Perlan Mission II video (MP4), photos/imagery and more information can all be downloaded at <https://we.tl/t-zi6l8bvchz>

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PRESS CONTACTS

Thales, Media Relations

Alice Pruvot

+331 57 77 89 52

alice.pruvot@thalesgroup.com

Air & Space in the UK

Jackie Lucas

+44 (0) 7799 337 329

jackie.lucas@uk.thalesgroup.com

Airbus Americas

James Darcy

571-214-1722

james.darcy@airbus.com

Focused Image for Airbus Perlan Mission II

Kristina Messner

703-678-6023

kmessner@focusedimage.com

