

PRESS RELEASE

13th November 2019

EU DRIVER+ Project Stages Ambitious Final Demonstration in Poland and The Netherlands

Drones, advanced solutions and cross-border cooperation to feature in advanced test of DRIVER+ outputs

In late November this year a major crisis management demonstration staged by the DRIVER+ project will be held in Poland, with additional remote input and participation from The Netherlands. This Final Demonstration event represents the culmination of several years of conducting Trials, intense hard work and best practice development by many different members of the pan-European EU-funded DRIVER+ project.

The main organiser and the leader of the preparation process of the Final Demonstration is the Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The Final Demonstration will take place in three different locations at the same time: the Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Main School of Fire Service, both in Warsaw/Poland and the Safety Region Haaglanden in The Hague/The Netherlands.

DRIVER+ is a pan-European project designed to build Europe's resilience to climate-related crisis situations, such as wildfires and flooding, as well as other threats such as earthquakes and terrorism.

<https://www.driver-project.eu/>

Marcel van Berlo, the DRIVER+ project's technical coordinator, said: "The final demonstration in Poland is the last in a series of Trials executed within the framework of the DRIVER+ project. There are two key objectives.

'1. This Final Demonstration is expected to be the most mature of the DRIVER+ Trial series, since it will be based on the final version of the project's Trial Guidance Methodology and the Test-bed Technical Infrastructure, two of the DRIVER+ project's key outputs. The Final Demo will be addressing the needs of the main end-user – the European Union's Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC).

"The ERCC is the heart of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, coordinating the delivery of assistance to disaster-stricken countries (such as relief items, expertise, civil protection teams and specialised equipment). Thus the Final Demonstration will directly address the pan-European approach towards which the DRIVER+ project has been aiming for the past years.

"The DRIVER+ project has been exploring, testing and promoting new ways to manage crises of various kinds, by assessing in realistic, practical and multinational Trials a number of innovative solutions, using the newly developed Trial Guidance Methodology and Test-bed Technical Infrastructure.

'2. The second key objective is to demonstrate the outcomes of the DRIVER+ project and to sustain its results.

'Outcomes that will be demonstrated include the DRIVER+ Trial Guidance Methodology, and the Test-bed Technical Infrastructure, plus other key project outputs such as the Portfolio of Solutions, and it will be reinforcing the launch of the new Crisis Management Innovation Network Europe (CMINE).'

Karolina Trzebińska, one of the organisers of the Final Demonstration and a senior manager at the Space Research Centre in Poland, said: 'This closed event for high level crisis management practitioners is intended to promote the idea of trialling and Centres of Expertise (another key project output). The Space Research Centre and the Main School of Fire Service plan to benefit from the extensive knowledge gained through participation in DRIVER+ and become a Centre of Expertise supporting the re-use of project outcomes.

'To this end, SRC is involved in a number of activities, especially in cooperation with the Central European Drone Demonstrator in Poland (the national establishment for demonstrating and testing of drone applications), aiming at testing, assessing and developing best practices for the use of aerial drones for crisis management, rescue operations and public safety. SRC also intends to actively support development, testing and assessing arrangements for air space (air traffic) management enabling the use of drones for crisis-related operations.

'Last but not least, SRC may also act as a Centre of Expertise for testing new GIS geo-information products and services, based on satellite imagery (especially from Copernicus), along with images and videos from drones, and any possible combinations thereof, building upon the knowledge gained from several ESA, EU and national projects related to downstream Earth Observation development.'

The project partners and associated specialists and solutions providers will be outlining the DRIVER+ project and final demonstration findings through a final conference in Brussels on 19-20 February 2020 and supporting broader dissemination of the results through an active programme of media activities, publications and online and social media promotion.

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DRIVER+ Background information

Governments and populations are increasingly aware of the threats to public safety posed by climate change, in particular wildfires and flooding. DRIVER+ is a pan-European project tasked with promoting major new, science-based improvements in Crisis Management (CM), to improve response to natural disasters and other threats.

The project's scope includes the promotion and trialling of advanced technologies and other CM solutions in realistic scenarios, the development of scientifically based trial methodologies (the Trial Guidance Methodology and the Test-bed Technical Infrastructure), plus other key project outputs such as the Portfolio of Solutions, the building of cooperative information sharing networks, the Crisis Management Innovation Network Europe (CMINE), and the establishment of a network of Centres of Expertise.

This project has received funding from the European Union's 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration under Grant Agreement (GA) N° #607798