

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release.

Connected Nokia Drone Platform Chosen for Nationwide Drone Network in Belgium



*Nokia just announced a contract with Citymesh—a Belgian telecom operator—to supply the Nokia Drone Networks platform with 70 Drone-in-a-Box (DiAB) units.
(Photos: Nokia)*

Contact

contact@yellowscan.com
+33 411 931 400
www.yellowscan.com

Address

525 Avenue Saint-Sauveur du Pin
34980 Saint-Clément-De-Rivière
France

Company

SAS au capital de 157 342 €
SIRET: 813 091 543 00021
TVA : FR24813091543

May 19th, 2023 – Nokia just announced a contract with Citymesh, a telecom operator based in Belgium, to supply the Nokia Drone Networks platform with 70 Drone-in-a-Box (DiaB) units. These DiaB units will be deployed across Belgium at docking stations in 35 different emergency zones, covering the country with a 5G automated drone grid to accelerate mobilization of resources 24/7.

Immediately following a call to emergency services, a drone will be dispatched to gather information on the situation. The DiaBs can capture aerial footage and transfer it to control centers. Collecting information in the first 15 minutes after a call is critical; this ensures that first responders are better prepared to respond to an emergency.

In late 2020, Nokia—alongside Honeywell International as consortium lead—was [selected as part of Project FACT](#) (Future All Aviation CNS Technology), a research and development program initiated under the SESAR 2020 program, managed by the Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR) Joint Undertaking. The SESAR Joint Undertaking's Project FACT featured the deployment of Nokia's 4G and 5G wireless network infrastructure at an airport in Istanbul. Both low- and high-altitude air traffic data communications were tested using modified airliner and drone avionics.

Thomas Eder, Head of Embedded Wireless Solutions for Nokia, shared in an interview with *Avionics*, "Nokia and Citymesh maintain a longstanding partnership in Private Wireless with a proven track record."

He added that the mission of Citymesh, which is supported by the Belgian government, "is to first revolutionize the public safety sector and later other industries with this nationwide network of drones. [It] is a great example of how strong partnerships can scale in commercial and operational success. The contractual framework between Nokia and Citymesh contains everything that is required to deploy and maintain a nationwide network of Drones in a Box: hardware, software, subscription, training, maintenance, service, and more."

Nokia can leverage know-how in nationwide networks from deployment of DiaB units. Because of this, the company is well prepared to serve as a strong technology and service partner in projects like the [nationwide drone network in Belgium](#).

In discussing what he sees as the key factors leading to Citymesh's selection of Nokia's Drone Networks platform, Eder explained that "Nokia's approach to delivering a turnkey solution with all hardware and software components, including edge-cloud and network equipment, is an outstanding selling proposition."

Contact

contact@yellowscan.com
+33 411 931 400
www.yellowscan.com

Address

525 Avenue Saint-Sauveur du Pin
34980 Saint-Clément-De-Rivière
France

Company

SAS au capital de 157 342 €
SIRET: 813 091 543 00021
TVA : FR24813091543

He commented that the Nokia Drone Networks platform has always been designed for remote operations. This makes it ideal for the use case that Citymesh had in mind. Another factor is that the hardware is made in Nokia's own factory in Finland. "It could be important for the public safety sector, which may have geographic requirements for the origins of these devices," he said.

Eder then remarked on the Nokia Drone Networks platform's contributions towards enhancing emergency response capabilities. "Our Nokia Drone Networks platform leverages drone technology, 4G and 5G connectivity, and secure data analytics to enhance emergency response capabilities," he noted. "By providing real-time situational awareness, remote monitoring, and efficient communication, it supports emergency responders in making informed decisions, improving response times, and ultimately saving lives."

"If we look at today's drone operations in emergency response operations, centralized remote operations are the 'new kid on the block,' but very much needed by first responders."



'We've been impressed with Nokia as our partner for reliable wireless connectivity and an outstanding turnkey Drone-in-a-Box solution that we can customize to our specific needs.' – Hans Similon, General Manager, Citymesh Safety Drone

The open API framework of the Nokia Drone Networks platform, which allows for the integration of third-party applications, can expand the platform's capabilities and enable a wider range of use cases beyond emergency response. Eder shared an example of this: "Picture the scenario where fire departments aim to utilize drones

Contact

contact@yellowscan.com
+33 411 931 400
www.yellowscan.com

Address

525 Avenue Saint-Sauveur du Pin
34980 Saint-Clément-De-Rivière
France

Company

SAS au capital de 157 342 €
SIRET: 813 091 543 00021
TVA : FR24813091543

for rapid situational assessment during firefighting operations. By integrating their own incident management system with the Nokia Drone Networks platform through the open API framework, they can streamline their response efforts.”

“Through this integrated application, the fire department can swiftly deploy drones to collect real-time video feeds, thermal imaging, and other crucial data, which can be directly transmitted to the incident management system,” he explained. “This enables incident commanders to make informed decisions and allocate resources effectively. The open API framework empowers the fire department to seamlessly integrate their own incident management system with the Nokia Drone Networks platform, thereby enhancing their first response capabilities.”

“By leveraging third-party applications, they can harness the platform's real-time data collection and analysis capabilities, significantly improving situational awareness and facilitating effective decision-making in critical firefighting operations,” Eder added, explaining, “This example can be replicated in a similar way for our customers in the agriculture, energy, construction, and utilities verticals.”

The drones that will be deployed in Belgium are equipped with video and thermal cameras to conduct real-time aerial data collection. Eder commented that they will be remotely managed from five centralized operations centers and will be available to be deployed around the clock.

“With emergency services receiving over two million calls annually, this capability greatly enhances their ability to make informed decisions and optimize their response to emergencies,” he said. “This means faster decisions based on real-time data with less personnel onsite.”

Nokia’s other collaborations include efforts with [Yellowscan](#) and Rohde & Schwarz. Establishing a strong ecosystem and creating partnerships are important factors for achieving success, Eder remarked. “I am confident that our data collection platform capabilities will be further enhanced through partnerships in the application ecosystem,” he said.

Implementation of the 70 DiaB units will start this summer, according to Eder. “Based on the planning phase and previous projects, it has become evident that strong project management, intelligent geographical deployment decisions, training and the right partners are crucial,” he commented. “There is a notable parallel between Nokia's network deployment business and the deployment of Drones in a Box with our Edge Cloud platform [[Nokia MX Industrial Edge](#)].”

Contact

contact@yellowscan.com
+33 411 931 400
www.yellowscan.com

Address

525 Avenue Saint-Sauveur du Pin
34980 Saint-Clément-De-Rivière
France

Company

SAS au capital de 157 342 €
SIRET: 813 091 543 00021
TVA : FR24813091543

He explained how the team is working to ensure scalability and reliability of the system in order to meet the demands of a nationwide deployment. "Redundant and distributed components within the software architecture will be deployed to enhance reliability, network connectivity, and operational readiness," he said.

"Thorough testing under various scenarios and load conditions is conducted to identify and address any potential bottlenecks or performance issues; this is part of our standard operating procedures at Nokia. Proactive monitoring and maintenance are important to continuously monitor the system's performance, detect anomalies, and promptly address any issues that may arise. Regular updates, patches, and security measures are key to ensure the system integrity and protection against vulnerabilities."

This article was written by Jessica Reed and published by [Avionics International](#).

Contact

contact@yellowscan.com
+33 411 931 400
www.yellowscan.com

Address

525 Avenue Saint-Sauveur du Pin
34980 Saint-Clément-De-Rivière
France

Company

SAS au capital de 157 342 €
SIRET: 813 091 543 00021
TVA : FR24813091543