

AirConnect-NF

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Press release of EurA AG on the innovation project AirConnect-NF



The funding notification is finally here - Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure supports the innovation project AirConnect-NF in Schleswig-Holstein

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Waiting for the official funding notification for the feasibility study AirConnect-NF, which deals with the use of Leck Airport for the deployment of UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems) and air taxis in the northernmost part of North Frisia, has come to an end. All project participants were delighted to receive the funding notification from the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (BMVI), which arrived on Tuesday.

The funding notification has arrived, the kick-off event was successful, subcontractors have been officially commissioned - the project is in full swing. Ingo Böhm ceremoniously opened the AirConnect-NF innovation project in North Frisia on 29 October in Amt Südtondern as head of the office. Afterwards Ralph Hirschberg, project manager AirConnect-NF and branch manager of EurA AG Schleswig-Holstein, provided insights into how difficult it is to use air taxis in urban regions and to use them with the corresponding infrastructure such as the Vertiports. "The rural area in North Frisia is proving to be particularly suitable for testing such innovations," says Ralph Hirschberg.

The innovation project was initiated by the mayors Werner Schweizer from Klixbüll, Dirk Enewaldsen from Tinningstedt and Andreas Deidert from Leck. After opening greetings, the current status of the project was presented. First milestones have already been reached.

Among the speakers at the kick-off event was Horst Zell from RolaWind GmbH in Kiel, who is an expert for the certification of on- and offshore wind turbines and rotor blades. Mr. Zell reported in detail about the needs and perspectives of UAS and flying taxis in North Frisia.

Afterwards Robert Günnel from EurA AG Aachen informed about the current state of science of the aircraft, which are currently available on the market. Dr. Niels Renzing, Deputy Director of the Institute for Rescue and Emergency Medicine at the University Hospital of Schleswig-Holstein, who has been in charge of the HALLIGeMED project since the beginning of 2019, presented the challenges of medical care in rural areas and telemedicine and explained how these can be used in future scenarios.

Christian Klit Johansen (Deputy Director of the Unmanned Aircraft System - Test Centre/SDU Dronecenter of the University of Southern Denmark in Odense) provided further interesting insights from a Danish point of view. The University is conducting about seven different research projects dealing with the use of UAS and air taxis in agriculture or for medical purposes. Mr. Johansen already presented current examples and applications of UAS and aerial taxis.



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Finally, Mitja Wittersheim from Beagle Systems GmbH in Hamburg presented her self-developed aircraft for the inspection of critical infrastructure. The current prototype is currently undergoing flight testing, and from the second quarter of 2020 it will also be tested under real conditions.



Beagle Systems-Mitja Wittersheim, SDU Dronecenter-Christian Klit Johansen, UKSH-Dr. Niels Renzing, EurA AG-Ralph Hirschberg, RolaWind GmbH-Horst Zell, EurA AG-Robert Günnel, (copyright: Melissa Körner (EurA AG))

The subsequent round of discussions rounded off the programme of the event. Discussion points were e.g. how the future funding landscape will look like, how the feasibility study "AirConnect-NF" stands out from other projects in Germany, how the existing transport infrastructure for the use of UAS and air taxis in North Frisia has to be improved, which regulatory framework conditions have to be designed in the future and which environmental impacts can be expected.

The project team would very much like to give all interested parties the opportunity to take part in an online opinion poll on the expansion of Leck Airport into a test site for UAS and flight taxis. The link can be found on the homepage www.airconnect-nf.de.

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