

FLYING IRISH FLAG AT SAT-NAV COMPETITION

The Irish winner of this year's European Satellite Navigation Competition for its 'Jack-In-The-Box' concept, which can be applied in search and rescue, environmental and disaster scenarios, will represent Ireland at the European Finals in Marseille at the 'Space Oscars' during European Space Week on 4 December.

Drone Consultants Ireland was founded in 2016 by CEO Peter Downey and COO Ian Kiely to provide consultancy and support to a variety of emergency response services, government entities and private clients.

It has also organised and hosted 'Drone & Tech Expo' – an industry showcase in the RDS and the only Drone Expo in Ireland. The company recently welcomed Keith Tracey to the development team as CTO and now plans to develop many other concepts.

The hardwired UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) is equipped with an optical zoom camera to survey areas of 300sq km from a fixed position (Dublin City is 115sq km), and can live stream video data via satellite to emergency control centres or rescue teams, while simultaneously transmitting pinpoint location data of assets, people or events.

It can also provide a 4G communications network to persons in danger or trapped and carries a backup battery in order to return to its box in case of fuel failure.

'Jack-In-The-Box' is a self-sustaining, aircraft deployable drone system that can be parachuted to remote and inaccessible locations, supplying flight bursts of 10 continuous hours for up to 500 expedition hours as opposed to 25 minutes flight time for a standard drone. It has immediate applications in search and rescue, environmental and disaster scenarios.

SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL

Receiving the award Ian Kiely, Chief Operating Officer with Drone Consultants Ireland, said: "We're really excited to receive this award and look forward to attending 'European Space Week' in Marseille in December to compete for the top awards. We believe this product has significant potential and are working to bring it to market.

"Drone Consultants is a growing company, looking at partnerships and preparing for funding in the immediate future to launch a successful commercial product. We are grateful to the New Frontiers programme and for the ongoing support from Enterprise Ireland and The Media Cube at the Institute of



Pictured at the presentation of the award to the 2018 Ireland Region Winner of the ESN competition were (l-r): Bruce Hannah, Chief Technical Officer at the National Space Centre Ltd; An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar; and Ian Kiely, COO, Drone Consultants Ireland.

Art Design and Technology) in Dun Laoghaire where we are currently based."

Now in its 15th year, the innovative ESN competition awards the best services, products and business ideas using satellite navigation and earth observation data in daily life. Its mission is to spur the development of market-driven applications, based on satellite navigation (SatNav) technologies. The burgeoning SatNav market is expected to grow to €240 billion by 2020.

The Ireland Region Competition for the annual ESNC awards has been organised and sponsored by National Space Centre Ltd since 2012. Based at Elfordstown Earthstation in Middleton, the centre provides ground segment and uplink/downlink services in the satellite and space sector.