



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

20 February 2024

Weather balloons are being released for the Sutherland Spaceport Site by Orbex

- Scotland-based orbital launch services company and spaceport operator, Orbex, is conducting a series of weather balloon experiments to gather crucial data on the local atmospheric conditions at Sutherland Spaceport, home of its orbital launch operations.
- We do not expect any disruption to the local community as the balloons will be launched from an area close to the spaceport site. However, residents in Sutherland might see some of the balloons in the sky from a distance. In the UK, thousands of weather balloons are released annually to obtain atmospheric data.
- A weather balloon carries a small expendable measuring device called a radiosonde to the stratosphere to send back information on atmospheric pressure, temperature, humidity, and wind speed. The balloon data will help guide the design, and possible launch time, of the Orbex Prime vehicle at Sutherland Spaceport.
- We do not expect balloons to land in the local area, however if that is the case, they are trackable and the Orbex team will recover them.
- The balloons are made of latex and are filled with small volumes of helium, ensuring no fuel emissions.
- The initial weather balloon launches will take place on multiple dates during the months of February and March. After the initial tests in February and March, it is expected that one weather balloon will be launched daily, to gather ongoing data.
- Orbex have obtained the required licences for this activity from the regulators, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Ofcom.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For further information, please contact Grayling:

Orbex@Grayling.com

Niamh Frizzell: +44 (0) 7921 352 847

Sian Povey: +44 (0)7860 752 569



About Orbex

Orbex is a UK-based spaceflight company with headquarters, production and testing facilities in Scotland, and design and testing facilities in Denmark. Orbex staff members have professional backgrounds with NASA, ESA and several commercial spaceflight organisations. The company is funded by the Scottish National Investment bank, two of the UK's largest venture capital funds, BGF and Octopus Ventures, two of Europe's largest venture capital funds, Heartcore Capital and the High-Tech Gründerfonds, as well as strategic investors Elecnor, parent company of Deimos Space, and Jacobs, the largest services supplier to NASA. The company has won more than a dozen R&D contracts from a wide variety of bodies, including the UK Space Agency (UKSA), the European Space Agency (ESA) and the European Commission Horizon 2020 programme.

In 2022, Orbex signed a lease with development agency Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) for the spaceport location on land on the A' Mhoine peninsula in north-west Sutherland. Orbex will oversee the construction and assume full operational management of the new facility. The 10-acre launch site will become the long-term 'home' spaceport of Orbex and will see the launch of up to 12 orbital rockets per year, carrying satellites into low Earth orbit.

<https://www.orbex.space/>