



ICAO celebrates latest step in aviation innovation with code assignments for world-first off-planet flight operation

For immediate release

Montréal and Jezero Crater, Mars, 20 April 2021 – In support of its Organization-wide focus on innovation in aviation, ICAO presented NASA and the FAA with official ICAO flight designator and call-sign codes for the ‘Ingenuity’ helicopter flight conducted on Mars.

The flight was operated using the ‘IGY’ three-letter designator, and call-sign ‘INGENUITY’, which has been assigned to NASA in the ICAO’s Designators for Aircraft Operating Agencies, Aeronautical Authorities and Services.

The location of the flight was ceremonially assigned ICAO location designator ‘JZRO’ for the Jezero Crater where the Mars operation took place.

“ICAO Council States have prioritized the enabling of innovation for this Organization, and Ingenuity provides an excellent example of just how far our capabilities for powered flight are evolving today,” noted the President of the ICAO Council Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano.

“ICAO’s eyes are on the future of flight, and Ingenuity is a perfect example of the safe, cyber-secure, and zero-emission capabilities that will make that future so exciting, autonomous, and sustainable,” added ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu.

ICAO’s highlighting of the Ingenuity achievement is part of the UN agency’s strong focus on enabling aviation innovation, and the current efforts of its secretariat to globally standardize and integrate unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) safely into traditional and new types of airspace.

The three-letter and call sign (telephony) designators which ICAO assigned to Ingenuity are traditionally used in air traffic control and assigned to aircraft operating for government agencies or servicing companies for commercial domestic and international operations. ICAO four-letter location designators are normally assigned to airports, and are used for flight planning applications.



An illustration of NASA's Ingenuity Helicopter flying on Mars. Credits: NASA/JPL-Caltech.

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About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized. ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders.

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