



Between 9th February and 12th March

ENAIRe is coordinating and managing in real time the flights of "SOFIA", the largest NASA airborne observatory in the world

- A Boeing 747 with a special telescope on-board, and scientific equipment and personnel, collects information from the stratosphere
- The project aims to deepen our knowledge of the Universe

Madrid, 18th February 2021

ENAIRe, through the Airspace Operations Coordination Department (COOP), has been responsible for coordinating the flights in Spanish airspace of SOFIA (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy), the world's largest airborne observatory, which has been developed and operated by NASA.

The goal of SOFIA is to study the universe in the infrared spectrum in order to understand how galaxies develop and how both stars and planetary systems form and evolve.

SOFIA is scheduled to make a total of twenty scientific flights throughout Europe until 12th March, with the first having taken off on 9th February. Some of these flights are taking place in Spanish airspace and are managed by ENAIRe's controllers, who are responsible for making possible SOFIA's research work in real time.

To carry out this mission, a telescope was fitted on board a Boeing 747. From the stratosphere, this telescope collects information with no atmospheric interference, something that cannot be achieved in traditional land-based telescopes.

The astronomical phenomena that SOFIA is studying include the birth and death of stars, the formation of new solar systems, the identification of

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complex space molecules and black holes, as well as the planets, comets and asteroids in our solar system.

About ENAIRe

ENAIRe is the air navigation service provider in Spain.

As a company of the Ministry of Transport, Mobility and the Urban Agenda, it provides en route control services for all flights and overflights from five control centres in Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Gran Canaria and Palma, as well as approach services to every airport in the country.

In addition, 45 control towers receive ENAIRe's communication, navigation and surveillance services, and 21 airports, including the country's busiest, rely on its aerodrome control services.

ENAIRe is the fourth most important European air navigation service provider, and, in a clear commitment to the Single Sky initiative, belongs to international partnerships such as SESAR Joint Undertaking, SESAR Deployment Manager, A6 Alliance, iTEC, CANSO and ICAO.

ENAIRe is the official provider of aeronautical information in Spain.

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