

# SOLARIMPULSE

AROUND THE WORLD IN A SOLAR AIRPLANE

# Ω OMEGA

MAIN PARTNER

## PRESS INFORMATION

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### Solar Impulse maiden flight Bertrand Piccard: "I'm completely overwhelmed!"

On a perfect spring day with a clear blue sky over the Swiss town of Payerne and a dramatic Alpine panorama in the distance, the Solar Impulse prototype plane, HB-SIA, took off on its maiden flight at 10 a.m. on Wednesday.

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OMEGA is a company of the Swatch Group, the largest manufacturer and distributor of watches and jewellery in the world.

Solar Impulse founders and co-pilots André Borschberg and Bertrand Piccard followed the plane in helicopters throughout its two-hour flight. Borschberg reflected the feelings of the entire team when he said, "After almost seven years of work this is an unbelievable moment for all of us. We were fully concentrated but we were also able to enjoy this remarkable success."

The Solar Impulse prototype, with its 63-metre wingspan and weighing only 1700 kg, was flown by test pilot Markus Scherdel.

OMEGA is one of Solar Impulse's Main Partners and has supplied capital and technological support, including the performance simulation and testing system, an ingenious, lightweight system of landing lights and the so-called OMEGA Instrument.

The easy-to-read OMEGA Instrument, which displays important parameters to assist the pilot during landing, was invented by astronaut and Swatch Group Board Member Claude Nicollier. Nicollier has played an active role in the project from its earliest stages and led the flight control team in the telemetry room during Solar Impulse's maiden flight.

The aircraft successfully landed after its long-awaited maiden flight with a perfect landing at the airport in Payerne after about two hours in the air. The flight proved to be emotionally charged. Bertrand Piccard commented, "I had too many tears in my eyes to see the plane! It went so silently, so softly . . . I'm overwhelmed."

Solar Impulse, with its aim of circumnavigating the globe in a plane powered only by solar energy, could ultimately lead to finding ways to reduce our dependency on non-renewable energy sources.

### **OMEGA and Solar Impulse**

OMEGA and its partner companies at the Swatch Group are used to looking for non-standard approaches to the optimization of systems and devices and the engineers and technicians look forward to the unusual challenges posed by Solar Impulse. It is gratifying to deliver creative, reliable, robust solutions and to be a part of a project which has the potential to benefit the entire planet.

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