



UAVS Association

By Gary Clayton, Director

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems Association (UAVS) held three very successful Industry Days during 2009 where members received updates on the following activities:

- Watchkeeper Development and Hermes 450 Deployment from Thales Aerospace
- Zephyr High Altitude Long Endurance UAS Trials and Opportunities from QinetiQ, and
- UAS Operations in the Antarctic from British Antarctic Survey.

The 2010 programme has commenced with a combined topic Industry Day on 11 March with

- UAV Power & Propulsion and Composites in UAVs from Rolls-Royce.

Two further Industry Days are planned for 2010 and the subjects under consideration are:

- Software Certification for UAS
- UAS Ground Control and Mission Simulation
- Large UAS Development
- UAS Export - Controls and Procedures
- UAS Civil Applications
- End-User Operational Perspectives

These Industry Days not only provide an opportunity to cement existing business relationships but also to create new contacts and networks. As much as the event is scheduled around presentations, the real business activity occurs during breakout sessions.

UAVS continues to work closely with the CAA both on the UAS Steering Group and on the development of the CAA's CAP 722, Guidelines UAS in Controlled Airspace, which will be updated substantially later this year to bring it in line with the new Air Navigation - The Orders, CAP 393, issued in January 2010 but referred to as ANO2009.

In ANO2009 automatic exemptions for small UAS under 7kg have been dispensed with and the CAA's permission is now required to fly any small unmanned aircraft for surveillance and data gathering purposes, i.e. "aerial work", when the aircraft comes within:

- Over or within 150m of congested areas
- Organised open-air assemblies 1000+ persons
- Within 50m of vessels, vehicles or structures (not under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft)
- Within 50m of any person (exceptions exist for take-off/landing and persons under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft)

plus

- The aircraft must be kept within the line of sight (500m horizontal, 400ft vertical) of its 'pilot'. Operations beyond these distances must be approved by the CAA - the basic premise being for the operator to prove that he/she can do this safely.

These new impositions on the UAS operating community have driven many small-scale operators to join UAVS both to seek advice but to understand the new requirements. UAVS is in a unique position to help and advise these fledgling businesses

on how to ensure their operations are conducted safely and within the latest requirements of the regulations.

UAVS, being funded by its members, assiduously guards its independence, but it does seek harmonisation with other aerospace and defence representative bodies such as A/DJS (Aerospace Defence Security), the successor to both the SBAC and the DMA, sending representatives to A/DJS' Autonomous Systems Strategy Group and A&D KTN Autonomous Systems National Technical Committee. It also works alongside UVS International within the European arena in being a member of the International Coordination Council and participating in the EUROCAE Working Group on Light UAS striving towards similar goals especially in the operation of a practical Light UAV Scheme.

Through this involvement the Association can ensure that both large and small companies' interests are registered at the top level and that pertinent information from these key committees is fed back to the membership through its website.

2010 should see the official start of ASTRAEA II, the successor to the original ASTRAEA Programme instigated by UAVS. Further strategic advances are planned from the research that will be undertaken until the end of 2012, during which time it is expected that the CAA will set out its policy on larger scale commercial UAS operations and that the World Radio Conference will agree to the allocation of UAS frequency and sufficient bandwidth for the secure communications and data-links now being sought by the CAA, industry and the operators. For more information on the UAVS Association please visit its website at www.uavs.org.

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