CONTRIBUTING STAKEHOLDERS

Unmanned Systems Canada Association

By Wayne Crowe, President

In 2003 a small group of people dedicated to advancing the unmanned vehicle systems technology in Canada formed UVS Canada as a Canadian non-profit association. The principal activity of the association was the organization of an annual conference to bring industry, academia and government interests together to share experiences and to network. UVS Canada also established and maintained an informal relationship with UVS International that consisted mainly of information sharing.

As time progressed, a group approached AUVSI to establish a Canadian affiliate - AUVSI-Canada was formed in 2007. The creation of a second unmanned vehicle association in Canada caused a certain amount of confusion within the community and, over the next few years, it became increasingly unclear as to who really represented the UVS community in Canada. There was also a strong feeling that the Canadian community was too small to support two associations.

Over the last two years, the two Canadian associations began a dialogue to determine the feasibility of a merger. The merger of UVS Canada and AUVSI-Canada was approved by the boards and memberships of both associations and, as of 1 January 2010, Unmanned Systems Canada was formed.

Unmanned Systems Canada, in French, Systèmes Télécommandés Canada - is an independent Canadian federally registered not-for-profit association representing the unmanned vehicle systems community in Canada with the following objectives:

• To be the single voice representing the interests of the Canadian unmanned systems community which includes industry, academia, government, military and other interested persons;

• To promote public awareness, education and appreciation for the Canadian unmanned systems community to itself, to Canada and the world; and

• To promote and facilitate the growth of the Canadian unmanned vehicle systems community through education, advocacy, and exchange of ideas and technologies.

Summary of Activities for 2009

Improving Member Benefits

Unmanned Systems Canada has successfully negotiated a membership sharing affiliation agreement with AUVSI. This agreement greatly increases the value of membership as membership in one organization provides the benefits of both at no additional cost.

UAV Regulatory Issues

Working as the representative for the UAV community in Canada, Unmanned Systems Canada has participated in a Transport Canada Steering Committee reviewing regulatory requirements. Recently, Unmanned Systems Canada has been consulted by Transport Canada regarding their plan to collapse the steering committee and incorporate UAV regulatory development into the standard TC air regulations process. This is a major step forward in developing regulations regarding UAV operations in Canadian air space as it recognizes UAVs as legitimate air vehicles and assigns resources to ensuring regulations are developed and approved; A formal UAV regulatory development working group is planned to be established by Transport Canada in June 2010.

As an outcome of the Steering Committee involvement, Unmanned Systems Canada has led the creation of a special working group looking at all the conditions and risks associated with operations of UAVs "beyond visual range" (BVR). With this in mind a workshop was conducted in November 2009 in Victoria, BC to obtain community input into the UAV regulatory issues. The BVR Working Group was formally established in February 2010; results of their studies will be fed into the formal regulatory working group.

Arctic Activities

Unmanned Systems Canada has been researching Canada's commitment in Arctic monitoring and assessment with a view to assisting in the implementation of unmanned vehicles in meeting Canada's international Arctic obligations.

The Arctic Monitoring Assessment Programme (AMAP) is an international organization that reports to the Arctic Council. It is actively supported by the eight Arctic countries, responding to governmental requests for information on the Arctic system. Unmanned Systems Canada is a member of the AMAP UAS Expert Group established at the request of the Arctic Council as a response to needs voiced by the scientific community for access to gather important environmental and climate data using unmanned aircraft systems (UAS).

Student Involvement

Student UAV Competition - Unmanned Systems Canada held their second student UAV design/build/fly Competition in May 2009. Ten teams registered for the competition and 4 attended the flying portion. The theme of the competition was forest fire monitoring and support to the on-scene commander. Building on that same theme, plans are underway for a joint UAV/UGV competition in 2010/2011.

Student Paper Competition - The 7th annual student paper competition was held in 2009 with the three finalists presenting their papers at the annual conference in November. The winner, Dominique Chabot of McGill University in Montreal, will be given the opportunity to accompany Unmanned Systems Canada to the UAS 2010 conference in Paris, France and present his paper before a broader audience.

Student Scholarship - For the 3rd consecutive year, Unmanned Systems Canada presented the Mark Cuss Memorial Scholarship to a deserving student with interests in unmanned vehicle systems. The 2009 winner was Michael Levesque of

Université de Sherbrooke.

2009 Conference - Across the Divide

In November 2009 we took our annual conference "across the divide" to the west coast of Canada - beautiful Victoria, BC. Despite the sagging economy we once again had a very successful conference attracting 250-300 people to take part in a day of workshops and 2 ½ days of conference presentations and networking.

With the single focus of a merged association and a larger venue, we know that our 2010 Conference "Innovation Through Communication" will be our most successful yet. Join us in Montreal QC at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth hotel on November 2 -5 for this premier Canadian UVS event as we showcase the UVS sector to domestic and international audiences. You don't want to miss it. Come and tell your story!!

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Canada Association