



UAS and SmallSat Weekly News

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19Aug17

\$7M behind push to make Ohio landing site for drone work Barrie Barber Staff Writer, Dayton Daily News, Friday, Aug. 18, 2017



The Ohio Federal Research Network, a consortium of universities geared toward winning federal contracts with NASA Glenn Research Center near Cleveland and defense labs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, is behind a **\$7 million** push to bring more drone work to the state.

A key part of the initiative is a **\$5 million** project the Air Force Research Laboratory and state of Ohio are collaborating on to make the Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport into a drone test center for the military and industry. The Springfield site would expand a current test range area, growing from seven square miles today to **200 square miles**, if the FAA signs off on the expected request.

By 2025, an industry study projected 2,700 drone industry jobs and a \$2.1 billion economic impact in Ohio and **100,000 jobs and \$82 billion economic impact nationally by 2025**. The Federal Aviation Administration estimates recreational drones will more than triple in numbers, rocketing from 1.1 million last year to more than 3.5 million by 2021. The commercial fleet could mushroom from 42,000 last year to 442,000 by 2021 FAA projections show.

<http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/behind-push-make-ohio-landing-site-for-drone-work/5IDRLnSfxKjvveeo1Z48bJ/>

Why drones and insurance “makes sense” Bethan Moorcraft 17 Aug 2017



Drones are starting to come in handy in the insurance industry. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) can be extremely beneficial in the property & casualty insurance sector, especially in the claims adjusting space. US-based Farmers Insurance recently hit the headlines for



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launching a nationwide drone program, targeting areas impacted by hailstorms and severe weather events.

UAV technology could also be used to assist with underwriting in the future, according to Tia Becker, CIP, manager, personal insurance, Burns & Wilcox. Drone technology has its own unique exposures, which will also vary between recreational and commercial use. The three key areas brokers and insurers need to be aware of for customers are: bodily injury, property damage and privacy, according to Becker.

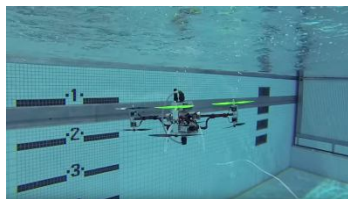
Transport Canada has particular rules and regulations regarding drone-usage based around things like drone weight, the age of the operator, altitude, proximity to an airport and many more. It also requires adequate liability insurance and wants to make it law that anyone who flies a drone that weighs more than 250g has at least \$100,000 of liability insurance coverage.

<http://www.insurancebusinessmag.com/ca/technology/why-drones-and-insurance-makes-sense-76345.aspx>

21Aug17

Researchers Create 'Naviator' Drone That Can Both Fly and Swim Would you be surprised to hear the U.S. Navy is interested?

MARCO MARGARITOFF AUGUST 18, 2017



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Researchers at [Rutgers University](http://www.rutgers.edu) have developed the 'Naviator' drone, an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that can fly through the air like a standard drone, then land on water, submerge itself, and travel under the surface like a mini submersible. Better yet, **it can even re-surface** and take to the skies again with ease. <http://www.thedrive.com/aerial/13601/researchers-create-naviator-drone-that-can-both-fly-and-swim>



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Drones to Fly Into Eclipse Totality Path to Study Weather Pam Wright, weather.com



Scientists will use drones to study how Monday's eclipse effects weather

Monday's missions will use sensors mounted on the drones to collect temperature, humidity, wind and pressure readings before and after the eclipse and during totality when the moon blocks direct, solar heat changes. Scientists can then study how those changes affect the weather.

"It may sound relatively simple but essentially you take away that radiation, that heat in a certain area," says Jacob, "it starts to cool down, as it cools down you essentially get **a giant sucking effect** from the hot air around and into this colder region." "Nothing," says Jacob, "could be cooler or geekier." <https://weather.com/science/space/news/drones-eclipse-path-study-weather>

The Next Level Of Cell Tower Inspections 2017-08-18 Kelley Roberts



AT&T To Use Artificial Intelligence For The Next Level Of Cell Tower Inspections

Imagine in the future a drone stationed by a cell tower. It fully charges itself. It then inspects and communicates the condition of the tower, with the future possibility of repairs it. It's a game-changing concept.

The thought process behind this idea is similar to the concept of driverless cars, the ultimate goals being full automation. While AT&T isn't there yet, they have created a **deep learning-based algorithm** that analyzes video footage and shows promise in detecting defects and anomalies. Currently, they are investigating how drones can be used to inspect these towers and feed HD video to our technicians, who can view the video in real-time.

<http://www.uavexpertnews.com/2017/08/next-level-of-cell-tower-inspections/>



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Mangrove-planting drones on a mission to restore Myanmar delta Thin Lei Win

There is an "urgent need" to restore mangroves to stem saltwater invasion of farmland and shoreline erosion due to sea level rise, as well as to protect lives and property from storms and floods in coastal areas.

Drones flying 100 meters (328 ft) above the ground take highly detailed, 3D images of the land while sensors record information such as soil type, soil quality and moisture. The data is then used to create a planting pattern, pinpointing the best spots and species to plant in each location.

Then a drone uploaded with the mapping information flies 2 meters above the ground, shooting biodegradable seed pods designed to enhance germination success. A drone carrying 300 seed pods can cover 1 hectare in 18 minutes, according to BCE. Once the process is fully automated, a single pilot operating six drones can plant up to 100,000 trees per day.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-environment-mangroves-tech-idUSKCN1B10EQ>

DJI Drones Collect Gas From Mount Etna In Volcano Exploration World August 21, 2017



DJI and the University of Mainz, Germany, have completed a ground-breaking mission for volcano research by collecting gas directly from the crater of Italy's Mount Etna. The gas measurement box used electrochemical sensors with detectors that captured the volcano's vapors and provided an estimate of the gas concentration when the drone returned to the base camp. The mission found that **sulphur concentrations are much higher near vents**, the cavities from which lava flows. In addition, the drone was able to sample solids that were forming due to sulphur reacting in the atmosphere with water and other components helping the scientists to better grasp the chemical evolution of volcanic gas plumes. http://uasweekly.com/2017/08/21/dji-drones-collect-gas-mount-etna-volcano-exploration-world-first/?utm_medium=push_notification&utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=rss_pushcrew



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We've Caught a Glimpse of Northrop's Carrier-Launched Tanker Drone



David Axe August 21, 2017

The U.S. Navy's future drone tanker has begun to break cover. In mid-August 2017, the first photos [appeared](#) depicting Northrop Grumman's entry in the Navy's Carrier-Based Aerial Refueling System, or CBARS — the years-long effort to produce the **first drone warplane** for the Navy's carrier air wings.

The photos, obtained by trade publication Aviation Week, depict one of Northrop's X-47B jet-powered drone demonstrators U.S. Air Force's secretive Plant 42 facility in Palmdale, California. The X-47B in the photos carries, under its 62-foot-span delta-shape wing, what appears to be a Cobham aerial-refueling pod. On the opposite side of the wing, there's a drop tank for extra fuel.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/weve-caught-glimpse-northrops-carrier-launched-tanker-drone-21983>

Drones and weather balloons team up in Arctic tests Mark Rockwell Aug 21, 2017



Equipment at the climate measuring station in Oliktok Point, Alaska. (Photo courtesy NOAA)

Researchers from Sandia National Laboratory combined 13 foot-tall tethered weather balloons with free-ranging weather-data-collecting octocopter aerial drones in a restricted airspace test site that extends **from Alaska's Prudhoe Bay almost to the North Pole**.

The test site is a 700-mile-long, 40-mile-wide stretch of airspace from Oliktok Point – the northernmost point of Alaska's Prudhoe Bay. The area was put under the stewardship of Sandia, the



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Department of Energy and the Federal Aviation Administration in 2015 and serves as the base of operations for Sandia's Atmospheric Radiation Measurement Climate Research Facility.

<https://fcw.com/articles/2017/08/21/oliktok-arctic-drones-rockwell.aspx>

Clark Nexsen Shares Expertise on UAS Standard Development for Public Service Applications

Last month, Clark Nexsen presented on the status of a new standard under development for unmanned aerial systems at the annual conference of the National Fire Protection Association in Boston, Mass. Clark Nexsen's Kevin Kimmel, PE is a principal member of a new committee developing a standard for UAS operation and deployment within the Fire, Law Enforcement and Emergency Services. The standard will provide guidance for the selection, deployment, maintenance and pilot qualifications of UAS operations related to public safety operations. Kevin's presentation focused on the applications of use and requirements in implementing UAS equipment within U.S. air space. Also participating in development of the standards is Committee Chairman Charles Werner and Darren Goodbar both with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and Christopher Sadler of the York County Fire Department. The standard, officially known as NFPA 2400 – Standard for Small Unmanned Aerial Systems (sUAS) used for Public Safety Operations, will be released for public comment this fall at www.NFPA.org. <http://mailchi.mp/8a9413c1ec9d/unmanned-systems-association-of-virginia-doubles-its-membership-278753?e=9b4b804620>



New Industrial Electric Drone to Carry **100kg** Payloads 17 Aug 2017



A group of entrepreneurial engineers based in the UK has announced that it will build a mid-mass logistics drone for global markets. The system will be aimed initially at remote and isolated communities, but is planned to be fully capable of near urban operations in due course.

The unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) system, called [Sky Hopper](#), is an electrically powered tri-fan design to be constructed at Prestwick in the West of Scotland. Its avionics are being developed in Hampshire in South Central England. The planned cargo mass load of the aircraft is 100 kilograms.



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<http://www.unmannedsystemstechnology.com/2017/08/new-industrial-electric-drone-carry-100kg-payloads/>

Drones to be "the next best thing" for Louisiana farmers Aug 21, 2017 Dannielle Garcia



The LSU Ag Center has been researching how drones are revolutionizing the agriculture industry, especially in rice crops. "It will take consulting and scouting fields to the next level," said Jimmy Flanagan, the St. Mary parish county agent with the Ag Center.

Flanagan said there are two types of drones that can be helpful for Louisiana farmers. One uses infrared technology. So when the plant gets disease or fertility problems, you're catching it two weeks before you catch it with the naked eye.

The other type can give an aerial view that would otherwise be impossible to see. "You can get a much better view of the field as opposed to riding along the edges. It will give you a more accurate view of damages in crops for insurance purposes" <http://www.katc.com/story/36185517/drones-to-be-the-next-best-thing-for-louisiana-farmers>

23Aug17

Kespry First To Receive Haag Seal-of-approval For Accuracy August 23, 2017



[Kespry](#) announced that forensic engineering, research and testing firm, [Haag](#), has conducted an independent study analyzing the precision of Kespry's industrial drone platform. Haag concluded that Kespry's Roof Measurement Tool compared favorably with its own manual results. The study **found an average difference of just 0.6 percent** – within industry benchmarks – using Kespry drones rather than traditional manual field measurement methods. Haag also noted



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that Kespry drones could inspect roofs that would otherwise be unsafe for manual inspection without the use of harnesses, ropes and ladders.

The study examined 17 buildings of varying slopes, geometries and surface areas in the hail-prone Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan region and calculated individual slope areas as well as total roof areas. Four of the 17 roofs selected for sampling were either too slick or too steep to reliably measure manually, without roping, which was not an issue using Kespry's drone.

http://uasweekly.com/2017/08/23/kespry-first-receive-haag-seal-approval-accuracy/?utm_medium=push_notification&utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=rss_pushcrew

Advanced Aircraft Company (AAC) is now accepting deposits for Hercules UAS.

Deliveries will begin December 2017 [August 23, 2017](#)



Advanced Aircraft Company (AAC) is pleased to announce that the Hercules unmanned aerial system (UAS) will begin customer deliveries in December 2017. Customers placing an order with a 20% deposit by September 1, 2017 will receive a 10% discount. The base model price of the Hercules UAS is \$60,000 USD. The discounted price is \$54,000 USD with a \$10,800 USD deposit placed by September 1, 2017.

The Hercules is a unique long endurance multi-rotor UAS **that incorporates two new technologies.** The aircraft incorporates a series hybrid electric propulsion system and has patent-pending aerodynamic design improvements. These two technologies enable the aircraft to fly up to 3.5 hours or carry a 4 pound payload for 2 hours. The aircraft has a 36 pound gross weight and is intended for FAA Part 107 operations. Hercules is useful for many applications that benefit from long endurance such as precision agriculture, mapping, first responders, and infrastructure inspection.

The Hercules UAS offers unique advantages to the UAS fleet operator. The increase in flight time dramatically improves the utilization of the workforce, enabling up to 45% reduction in the cost per acre for the operator to acquire data. The increased payload capacity avoids repeat overflights that require swapping payloads needed for complete data acquisition. The logistical footprint of the



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system is small because there is no need for a generator, battery charger, or extra batteries. Simply add more gas to the aircraft and take off again. Three gallons of fuel is enough energy to fly the aircraft for the whole day. Finally, busy operators can break even on the capital investment of a Hercules over a battery powered multi-rotor in as little as 11 weeks.

http://uasweekly.com/2017/08/23/advanced-aircraft-company-aac-now-accepting-deposits-hercules-uas-deliveries-will-begin-december-2017/?utm_medium=push_notification&utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=rss_pushcrew

New drone cage in Blacksburg to be a playground for researchers pushing the limits [Jacob Demmitt jacob.demmitt@roanoke.com](mailto:jacob.demmitt@roanoke.com)



A cage designed for drone experiments is being constructed near the Duck Pond on the Virginia Tech campus. Because it's enclosed, the 80-ft. tall cage will be considered an indoor facility where many of the federal regulations that govern use of public airspace won't apply.

BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's new drone cage is taking shape on the north side campus, promising students and researchers a place to go when they want to push the boundaries on new technologies outside of what is allowed in public airspace.

The facility is under construction now. It will sit near the Duck Pond and will measure 300 feet long, 120 feet wide and 80 feet tall. It will be made of the same netting used at golf course driving ranges. The net will be held up by about 20 poles to form a large box. Because it's enclosed, the cage is considered an indoor facility where many of the FAA regulations that govern use of public airspace don't apply. At the same time, Blanks said the porous netting allows researchers to work on their designs in real world environments with wind and weather.

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/blacksburg/new-drone-cage-in-blacksburg-to-be-a-playground-for/article_c94d5951-7a8b-54c5-ba13-f6fa41555c82.html



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Vanilla Aircraft Unique Unmanned Plane Sets FAI Duration **World Record**

August 23, 2017

The FAI has ratified a duration world record for a unique experimental unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The VA001, an unmanned aircraft that looks like a glider but is powered by a diesel engine, successfully **flew for 55hrs 56mins** non-stop and without re-fueling on 2 December 2016.

The flight took place at New Mexico State University's Unmanned Air Systems Flight Test Center near Las Cruces International Airport, New Mexico, USA, where the plane, which has a wingspan of 36 feet (12m) and is made of carbon fibre, was launched by tow at 8.15am local time on 30 November 2016. Once in the air the VA001 climbed to its cruising altitude of 6,500-7,000ft AMSL and then flew a figure-8 holding pattern for the remainder of the flight. During the flight it was **carrying a 20lb payload**.

The record flight was originally planned as a 120-hour mission, but **was ended early due to forecast bad weather**. Remarkably, there was enough fuel left onboard to fly a further 10,000km or 4.5 days.

The VA001 is being developed by Vanilla Aircraft LLC, a private company. The ultimate aim of the VA001 project is for the plane to carry a 30lb payload for 10 days at an altitude of 15,000ft. Potential commercial and military applications include surveying and communications.

http://uasweekly.com/2017/08/23/vanilla-aircraft-unique-unmanned-plane-sets-fai-duration-world-record/?utm_medium=push_notification&utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=rss_pushcrew



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24Aug17



August 23, 2017

AUVSI and National Council on Public Safety UAS Announce Partnership

The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) and the National Council on Public Safety UAS (NCPSU) have entered a partnership to encourage and promote the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) by public safety agencies.

AUVSI and NCPSU will collaborate to create education and information programs and materials to facilitate the widespread adoption of UAS among first responders. The partnership will also provide a forum for industry and the public safety community to review and evaluate the latest research and development in unmanned systems technology, as well as the products and services it enables to support mission-critical operations. <http://uasweekly.com/2017/08/23/auvsi-national-council-public-safety-uas-announce-partnership/>

Iceland Gets On-Demand Drone Deliveries Gwen Ackerman August 23, 2017

An Israeli autonomous drone delivery company has started commercial operations in Reykjavik, Iceland, **one of the first in the world** to offer the service on demand. Tel Aviv-based Flytrex's drones will fly more than 2.5 kilometers (1.6 mile) across a large bay that separates two parts of the city, delivering for online marketplace Aha, company Chief Executive Officer Yariv Bash said in an interview.

The drones will drop off the goods at a designated landing pad where they will then be taken to their final destination by foot, scooter or car. The companies hope to receive regulatory approval by the end of the year to transport orders straight to customers' backyards. Using drones **will save Aha 60 percent of delivery costs** to that area of Reykjavik, where it serves 8,000 customers, he said. Currently the drones make up to 10 deliveries a day, and will double the number by the end of next



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week. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-23/iceland-set-to-become-island-of-drone-deliveries>

Follow the Money: New Report Tracks Top 10 in Drone Funding Miriam McNabbon: August 17, 2017



Yuneec Typhoon H

Funding rounds for drone companies have gotten bigger and bigger as the industry matures. A new [report from CB Insights](#) names the industry's top 10 funding deals since 2012.

[DJI](#) takes the #1 (and ties for number 9) spot at \$105M; competitor [Yuneec](#) takes #2 for a round led by Silicon Valley giant Intel. 3DR takes spots 3, 4 and 9 on the list for multiple large rounds, totaling \$179M. [Airware](#), providing a drone operations platform and [Ehang](#), that maker of both the recreational Ghost drone and the more famous drone taxis, make the top ten. Military provider [Aeryon Labs](#) (also providing drones for the energy industry) takes spot # 5.

San Francisco-based [Swift Navigation](#) takes spot #8 for last month's \$34M deal. [Liquid Robotics](#), which has now been acquired by Boeing, provides the Wave Glider maritime system and made the list at #6. [Clearpath Robotics](#), a Canadian company manufacturing industrial robotic systems for ground, air, and water takes the final spot at #10.

As the drone industry matures, investment is ramping up. Smaller deals for seed rounds don't seem to have slowed – and drone companies who have now been around for several years are starting to reap the benefits of longevity and proven solutions.

<https://dronelife.com/2017/08/17/follow-money-new-report-tracks-top-10/>

CIT GAP Funds Invest in Advanced Aircraft Company 08/23/2017

The Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) announced today that its CIT GAP Funds has invested in Advanced Aircraft Company (AAC), an aeronautical engineering and aircraft manufacturing



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company based in Hampton Roads, Virginia. The Charlottesville Angel Network also participated in this investment round alongside CIT.



The [Advanced Aircraft Company](#) specializes in vertical takeoff and landing unmanned aerial systems, that target both the commercial and military markets. AAC was founded by William J. Fredericks in October 2015 as a technology spin off from the NASA Langley Research Center. While employed at NASA, Fredericks performed the conceptual design and lead the development of NASA's Greased Lightning UAV technology. It achieves the aerodynamic efficiency of a conventional fixed wing airplane, while simultaneously achieving VTOL capability. AAC has developed a licensing agreement that allows the company to utilize the NASA technology in order to bring it to market.

In addition to the Greased Lightning, AAC has developed another cutting edge aircraft, which it will bring to market first, the Hercules unmanned aircraft system (UAS). The Hercules is a multi-rotor UAS powered by electricity generated by a 2-stroke gasoline engine and features number of aerodynamic improvements. The unique aircraft features a streamlined aerodynamic design, which features hybrid electric propulsion that allows for longer flight times, and rigorous safety procedures that can be employed if the combustion engine fails. These technologies enable the Hercules UAS to fly multiple hours, while other battery powered multi-rotors are limited to 20 to 30 minutes of flight time.

"Today's UAS service providers suffer from low utilization of their workforce. The industry as a whole is ripe for innovation and there are many technological advances on the horizon that may be able to disrupt the market," said Tom Weithman, CIT GAP Funds Managing Director. "We believe AAC will be able to do just that **by enabling service providers to reduce their cost per acre by nearly 50%**. We are excited when we can identify impressive companies like AAC and look forward to their promising future." <http://www.4-traders.com/news/CIT-GAP-Funds-Invests-in-Advanced-Aircraft-Company--24993868/>



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25Aug17

Tanzania Gears Up To Become A Nation Of Medical Drones August 24, 2017 ESTHER LANDHUIS



A Zipline drone is launched in Rwanda. The company is now expanding to set up a national network in Tanzania.

Tanzania's government makes a special announcement: In early 2018, the nation will start using Zipline drones for on-demand delivery of blood, vaccines, medications and other supplies such as sutures and IV tubes.

Last fall, Zipline deployed 15 drones serving 21 clinics from a single base in a smaller neighboring country, Rwanda. The delivery operation planned for Tanzania would be **the world's largest — 120 drones at four bases serving more than 10 million people at 1,000 clinics across the country.** Zipline's 30-pound electric drones fly 68 mph to health centers up to 50 miles away. The drone service costs about the same amount as delivery using traditional road vehicles.

Tanzania's drone delivery service, in partnership with the country's ministry of health, is set to launch in its capital city, Dodoma, in January. Three more distribution centers will be added in the country's northwestern corner and Southern Highlands later in the year.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2017/08/24/545589328/tanzania-gears-up-to-become-a-nation-of-medical-drones>

FPL Using Drones to Help Restore Power After Storms Willard Shepard Thursday, Aug. 24, 2017





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"The drones allow us to take a look into those locations, identify any issue, report that immediately to the incident commander and then send the right team with the right equipment to remedy the issue," Cross said. The ground teams then know what equipment to take and from the images know the hazards.

Florida Power and Light now **has 11 of these unmanned aircraft** and they're assigned to quick special response teams that can be deployed anywhere in South Florida or across the state when a storm is approaching. "Once we arrive at a location, we can get the aircraft in the air within about 10 minutes," Cross said. <http://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/FPL-Using-Drones-to-Help-Residents-Get-Power-Back-After-Storms-441619463.html>

'Must pass' FAA reauthorization bill opens doors for commercial drones AUGUST 24, 2017 BY [LEWIS KING](#)



Pretty soon, it might be time to start taking drone delivery seriously – at least in the United States. The bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2017 now requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to establish a delivery air carrier certificate that would allow for package deliveries by drones. Considered a "[must pass](#)" bill when the U.S. Congress returns to session on Sept. 5, **the bill could push drone delivery into the mainstream**, allowing companies like Amazon the leeway they need to launch their more [ambitious drone delivery projects](#).

The language in the House and Senate FAA reauthorization proposals varies, and will need to be merged, but it's worth considering the extent to which both bodies agree on the importance of unmanned drone deliveries. Both bills require the Secretary of Transportation to issue a final rule within one year of enactment, authorizing the transport of deliveries by operators of commercial unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). Both bills stipulate that the final version should provide for a UAS air carrier certificate, and a corresponding certification process for individuals or companies seeking to engage in drone deliveries. <http://aircargoworld.com/allposts/must-pass-faa-reauthorization-bill-opens-doors-for-commercial-drones/>