

INTEGRATING DRONES INTO BUSINESS PROCESSES OF CORPORATES, GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND MUNICIPALITIES

STWALA

NTSU Aviation Solutions, South Africa

ABSTRACT

The Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), commonly known as drones, are formally part of aviation industry since 2012 (*amendment 6 to Annex 7 to Chicago Convention*). This technology has disrupted the aviation industry in such a manner that almost all aviation stakeholders are impacted, including those industries considered non-aviation (such as agriculture, mining etc.).

Drones bring unparalleled benefits and opportunities which otherwise may not be possible with any other technologies, such as security surveillance, e-commerce, cargo/parcel delivery, smart farming, mining applications, smart cities, urban mobility, etc.

Adoption of drones by companies, government departments, municipalities etc. is increasing at the rapid rate. To date, the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) issued almost 80 droneoperator's licences since regulations were promulgated in 2015.

The drone technology has been continuously evolving since inception and organisations are realising the importance of integrating drones into existing business processes. This is a relatively new concept and the following fundamental principles must be taken into consideration:

- Drone should be treated as a tool that performs a defined function, only safer, quicker, cheaper etc.
- Introduction of drones should fit in the existing or future business objectives.
- Introduction and integration of drones should follow a structured process.