



Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Fact Sheet

The Future is Here

Plans and trials for urban air mobility and last- to medium-mile cargo air delivery continue to transform the definition and operational requirements for air transport. Air travel is no longer perceived as a journey from airport A to airport B but rather a door-to-door integrated service. With IATA's continued work to ensure safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally sustainable aircraft operations, it is critical to work with both manned and unmanned industry. Considering the anticipated numbers of unmanned aircraft flying in airspace as well as new players in commercial space operations, finding the balance between regulation and innovation is paramount. In addition, standards and regulations must keep up with the pace of new technology. We can learn from existing trials and build upon their data to better understand the needed regulatory framework.

IATA will continue working with our members, industry partners and stakeholders to shape the future growth of air transport and together shape the skies of tomorrow. Our work continues in the following key areas.

Mitigation of Safety & Security Threats

With the increasing use of UAS for recreational purposes, the number of occurrences of UAS usage in an unauthorized manner, or with malicious intent, is on the rise. Recent sightings of uncooperative drones in close vicinity of commercial airliners and airports have resulted in extensive disruption to airline and airport operations, with a large impact on the travelling public. There is a risk of aircraft accidents and incidents caused by the irresponsible use of an unmanned aircraft, primarily in situations where they are operating near airports and being flown dangerously next to aircraft. Pursuant to IATA's work with industry stakeholders and ICAO, an industry initiative was endorsed during the ICAO 40th Assembly, under which IATA, ACI and other industry partners are currently developing guidance material for the detection and management of unauthorized operation of drones. The guidance material is planned to be finalized early 2021.

Integration into Airspace

Building on the conclusions of the ICAO 40th Assembly, IATA is leading work in collaboration with ICAO and industry representatives (manned and unmanned) to identify requirements for UTM/ATM interface and transformation in ATM. The work focuses on reviewing flight rules considering the expected increase in automation on board aircraft (manned and unmanned) and on the ground.



Regulations and Standards

Standards and regulations are moving at a slower pace than technologies and innovation. One of the main concerns is that trials and demonstrations may proceed without having the regulation in place. While data from these trials and demonstrations are critical to help shape future regulations, it also is necessary to ensure that they are safe. Finding the balance between innovation and safety standards/safeguards is key.

IATA continues its work with ICAO's Remotely Piloted Airspace Systems Panel (RPASP) and the UAS Advisory Group. In addition, IATA is involved in several initiatives to develop standards and best practices, including initiatives led by JARUS, EUROCAE and RTCA.